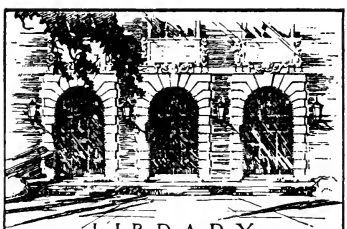

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SANDRON HALL,

OR

THE DAYS OF QUEEN ANNE.

BY

THE HON. GRANTLEY BERKELEY, M.P.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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SANDRON HALL;

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CHAPTER XV.

Canst thou recall some scene of bygone days,
When as a child, and seated 'midst the flow'rs,
The sweetest that the lap of earth displays,
Thou didst not fear the frown of future hours?
Or, like the lark, which singing, blissful flies
From the green fields to heaven's purer blue,
Thou—like that happy songster, sought the skies,
To dream of pleasures bright as they were new?
If in those moments some all-ruthless hand
In wrath had swept each solace from thy sight,
And seizing, left thee in a stranger land,
Where all was dreary as Egyptian night,
Would not thy heart have shrank beneath that blow,
As leaves recoil from winter's lips of snow?

AFTER the incident related in the last chapter of the foregoing volume, it seemed as if Sandron plunged with renewed appetite into the vortex of dissipation. Like a butterfly, he flew from flower

to flower, each new thing that was sweet and beautiful won him for a time, but like that restless insect, though tasting fresh honey, and hovering for an instant over the last gaudy hue of the sun's creation, he settled nowhere, but still seemed to be in search of some better perfection, the presence of which alone existed in the depths of his heated imagination. He was now appointed equerry to the queen, when, as his politics coincided with those of the all-powerful Countess of Marlborough, she became his greatest patroness, while from their situations at court he was also intimately acquainted with the houses of Ormond, Queensbury, Burlington, Abington, Huntingdon, and Hamilton.

The war having broken out with France and Spain, the Earl of Marlborough left England to take command of the army, by which proceeding his Countess was more at liberty to befriend her favourite party the Whigs, and Charles Sandron was soon initiated into all the craft and intrigue

attendant on the maintenance of political power. Master Surface now seldom crossed the path of our hero—if he did, he invariably seemed as shy of Sandron as Sandron was anxious not to renew their terms of intimacy ; thus they separated, as if by mutual desire. One thing alone surprised Sandron — it was that he had observed Master Surface to be much more about the purlieus of the government offices than usual, and once or twice he had seen him entering and egressing as it were privately from some houses and offices, the heads of which had they met him in the street would barely have acknowledged his acquaintance.

The spring continued to progress, and during those days in which Charles Sandron was on duty at the court the hours sped heavily enough, it being the humour of the queen to lead rather a retired and domestic life than a gay one. About this time a fresh addition was made to the court circle in the shape of Lady Margaret

Bonville, who was selected as a maid of honour, and whose youth and extreme beauty were the theme of admiration in the mouths of all who had opportunities of seeing her. She was, in truth, one of those creatures whose beauty intercedes against its being a sin to deem that Heaven has stamped its features on the face of humanity. In complexion very fair, it might almost be said transparently so, for the least excitement of her mind blushed on her conscious cheek with a roseate tint so transient and yet so admirable, that it left the longing eye of the observer fixed on the spot, as if in doubt if it had really seen so delicate and bright a change of colour. Her hair, in harmony with her features was also light, and remarkably luxuriant and glossy. With rather Grecian features, and lips beautifully formed and coloured, her eyes were large, light blue, and though bright, their fire was chastened by long lashes and a peculiar expression of meekness, sensibility, and virtue. Except when they

were illumined by a smile, those eyes seemed melancholy, and almost tearful. In stature she might be a little above the middle size, with a figure elastic and airy, but at the same time rounded off in the soft full perfection of female beauty.

With such a creature as the one described, amidst all the magnificent and exciting attributes of pomp and ceremony, and all the gorgeous display of dress and situation attendant on the customs of the court, Charles Sandron found himself often associated. At public ceremonies he beheld her attired in costly perfection ranged in the same ranks as himself, when his eyes had little else to do than wander around in search of the fairest resting-place; no wonder then that her's, when innocently employed in observation, and attracted by his handsome tall and remarkable figure, should oftentimes meet his. At first, when their glances did so meet, the fact only caused them each to turn some other way; but when she began from an undefined feeling of curiosity to gaze again, to

ascertain if he continued to regard her, on being aware of it, though her cheek was once more turned away, the blush, which even reached to her graceful neck, told tales she wished concealed; while conscious of the thrilling suspicion thus conveyed to his mind, the eyes of Sandron strayed no further than the rich carpet at her foot, and there seemed bound for ever.

It was impossible to be in the society of Lady Margaret Bonville, let the mind of man be ever so crossed and embittered, and not own the magic of her appearance and conversation; added to this, Charles Sandron felt but too happy to seize on fresh food for admiration of so powerful a cast as to break in upon the latent regret and disappointment which still lingered at his heart; no wonder then that under all the circumstances Lady Margaret made upon his mind a decided and forcible impression.

The Countess of Sunderland, a daughter of Lady Marlborough's, and a lady of the bedchamber, famed for her beauty as well as the

amiability of her disposition, was at this time also a leading star of fashion, and with her the Lady Margaret was on the most intimate terms of friendship; in their society, not only when brought together by their duties at court, but also at other times, Charles Sandron passed many of his pleasantest hours.

At the close of a lovely day in the earlier part of June, Sir Stamford and Lady Sandron were sitting, (at least the latter was) at the table on which lay two open letters, the larger one was in the hand-writing of Lady Monkton, but the other, which it seemed to have enclosed, was certainly written by Louisa Marmaduke. Sir Stamford was pacing to and fro as usual, with his hands in his waistcoat-pockets, every now and then giving vent to some burst of passion that evidently related to these letters.

"I tell ye, my lady," he continued, "the girl is bewitched, and old Lady Monkton deserves to be ducked; there must be some mum-

mery in the matter. What! will any soul alive have the audacity to tell me that Louisa no longer loves my son? Pshaw, I know better, I know the boy *is* fond of her! Has he not left the hounds to ride in her company? did he not tame a doe for her? did he not use to look as I in my younger day used to look when—? but—tut, tut, my Lady, I see how it all lies; just because he don't go dancing at the tail of her gown up one street and down another, now here, now there, he is held, forsooth, to have been guilty of neglect and to have forfeited all claim to her hand. The young monkey! her vanity is offended, and that starched piece of patchwork who forgets that she ever was young herself has fanned her false conceit into a serious flame.

"If I thought Charles had really slighted her, why zounds, I would have been the first to have turned him out of doors! but, no, no, this is a piece of tomfoolery I do not comprehend. The Tories perhaps are at the bottom of it; they

know that Louisa will be wealthy, and they want to prop the fallen fortunes of some of their needy titles with the oaks on her rich lands."

"It is wonderful," replied Lady Sandron; "it seems to me impossible that they should dislike each other; how could an affectionate girl like Louisa find in her heart to break off an engagement which had been fostered and maintained almost from infancy? What is to be done? think you, my love, that old Edith Mumstoff in the village could give us some good counsel and advice? they look upon her far and near as a cunning woman, as she has often discovered thieves when constables and justices have been at fault. It was she who bid Susan Marplot seek for a coal under the root of a plantain to put under her head at night; and true enough, the wench dreamed of the man who married her."*

* "The last summer," says Aubrey, "on the day of St. John the Baptist, 1694, I accidentally was walking in the pasture behind Montague House; it was twelve o'clock,

"Constables and justices at fault!' echoed Sir Stamford; "and outwitted by an old woman! faith, my lady, would that it were a singular instance of the sort. Cunning woman, cunning fiddlestick! if that is the way you intend to seek for information, truly, dame, you are likely to be as much in the dark as ever: but how now?—some stranger approaches; see, Leander growls and snuffs the air;" pointing at the same time to the old favourite deer-dog who lay stretched at his ease on the carpet. Sir Stamford then looked from the open window.

The sun had set behind the distant hills and beech-woods, though above them still blazed a flood of yellow light, as if loath to leave the heavens. Nothing, save the sighs of a soft

I saw there about two or three and twenty young women, most of them well habited, on their knees very busy, as if they had been weeding. I could not presently learn what the matter was; at last, a young man told me that they were looking for a coal under the root of a plantain, to put under their heads that night, and they should dream who would be their husbands; it was to be found that day and hour."

breeze, impregnated with sweets from the newly-blossomed shrubs, and bearing the chorus of birds as they sung themselves to sleep, met his ear, and no human object could be discerned upon the prospect. Sir Stamford turned from the window, and bidding the old hound be still, recommenced his perambulatory occupation. There was a silence of some moments, when the watchful animal once more rose, and with bristles erect and an aspect of careful curiosity stood upon his hinder legs, and placed his fore-paws on the window; another instant, and with a furious bark he would have sprang from it, but Sir Stamford pushed him aside and made him crouch at his foot. On the lawn beneath that window, which was just so high as only to permit her face and bust to be seen, stood a gipsy girl; the hood of her red cloak was drawn over her head, but from between its folds there flashed two eyes lustrously black and beautiful.

"Hey! what!" exclaimed Sir Stamford;

" my pretty mistress, I'll have you to the stocks, I will."

" Please you, my lady, let me tell your fortune," interrupted the gipsy, without attending to the threatened punishment.

" Fortune!" exclaimed Sir Stamford, " I know what your's shall be ;" here he seized on a bell, but before he could ring it, Lady Sandron arrested his hand.

" Hear me, my dearest Sir Stamford," she cried ; " let me for once rule in this matter! You know how willingly, how implicitly I obey you in all things ; but I beseech you permit me in this one instance to follow the bent of my inclinations. It is believed that gipsies from their knowledge of the stars can see into futurity; let me for once make the experiment and consult this girl."

Sir Stamford did not resist this appeal, but with an air of the greatest contempt and an impatient " pshaw !" he flung himself into the arms of a high-backed oaken chair, and awaited with

as much patience as he could the termination of what he conceived to be a most silly and ineffectual proceeding.

"Let me but look on your ladyship's palm, then, my good lady, and I'll tell you if you are born to be lucky or unlucky." As the gipsy said this, she flung back the hood of her cloak, and Corah's beautiful countenance was exposed to view. Lady Sandron leaned from the window and the gipsy took her hand.

"It is not my luck which I wish to consult you upon," said Lady Sandron, "but I would fain know the probable fortunes of those who are nearest and dearest to me."

Corah paused, looked hesitatingly at Sir Stamford, and then continued in a voice louder than usual, which was necessary from the situation of her hearers—

"Well then, my lady, there is one for whom you have very great love, who has been in great trouble and distress, and is now in much danger.

She loves a gentleman who is dark, but there is one who is neither dark or fair, who wants to take up with her. She is a little wavering in her mind not because she does not love, but because her thoughts have been led away; she is under a spell, my good lady, but I think I could find you a charm that would break it; *she is betrayed, and may fall, if not quickly befriended.*"

During this address, Sir Stamford had slowly risen in his chair, thence to his feet; and lastly he approached eagerly to the window. The gipsy seemed not to notice him, but continued: "The young lady is rather displeased at the journey the dark gentleman has lately taken into Kent, and at the company she supposes that he keeps, as also at the fate of her true love-token, the locket and letter. There is a little mystery in these things — that which is lost is found, and that which has been given away is retained by the donor. The lady, the dark gentleman and

a certain old lady who ought to give better counsel, have been playing many curious cards, but the gentleman who is neither fair or dark has trumped on them all, and has *won a most villanous game.*"

She had scarcely uttered the last word, when the flash and report of a pistol — the former rendered obvious by the darkness which had gradually increased — from an adjacent bed of laurels, and the whistle of a bullet, as it struck the wall close to the gipsy, cut short all further colloquy. Corah fled with a shriek; but Sir Stamford, in spite of his advanced time of life, with his faithful hound, leaped from the window, and drawing his sword, dashed in the direction whence the flash of the pistol had proceeded. The moment he reached the end of the laurel-bed Sir Stamford perceived, though indistinctly, the figure of a man running across the lawn: knowing that his own foot had long grown heavy with age, he cried to his faithful dog to "*hold*" the

retreating object; one word was sufficient, and Leander dashed in pursuit as if on the traces of a deer, while the good old knight followed as best he could. A yell of fury and then as if of pain was now heard to proceed from Leander, and, directed by the sound, Sir Stamford arrived near enough the scene of action to be aware that the dark figure of a man had flung the body of the disabled deer-dog to the ground, and then resumed a flight which soon evaded every attempt of his remaining pursuer to overtake him.

By this time Lady Sandron had alarmed the household, who scoured the lawn and park in various directions, some with lights, others without them, but to no purpose. They then returned to the lawn, where they found Sir Stamford with tears in his eyes, kneeling over the body of his wounded dog, who had been severely lacerated in the shoulder by a sword. Though thus hurt, that he had not assailed in vain was evident by the torn and bloody sleeve of a man's

doublet, which was yet entangled round his jaws. Search was then made for the gipsy, but in vain. The bullet, by its situation in the wall, must have passed very close to her, and had evidently been aimed so as to avoid entering the window, for it was directed more than a foot below the sill.

The laurel-bed was next examined, and there on the soft mould was the obvious impression of a man's feet, as if he had stood in the same place for some little time. The park-keepers and others who were in the habit of tracing poachers declared that the foot which had made those impressions did not belong to a common person, for that the boots were such as were only worn by the higher orders.

On the following morning, Sir Stamford having despatched an account of the transaction to his son, mounted his horse and proceeded in search of any gipsy encampment in the neighbourhood, being much interested in the fate of the

mysterious fortuneteller, who seemed to possess such a power of divination, or at least to know to some extent the not improbable position of circumstances connected with his family.

Having visited without success every wood, common, or retired lane, within the circumference of some miles, he returned home to calm the fears of his lady, and to attend to the care of his four-footed companion, who, propped up with cushions and administered to with as much solicitude as if he had been one of the human race, reposed in the corner of an apartment called, from its usual appropriation to magisterial business, the justice room. In this position of affairs we leave the Hall, to recount in another chapter much which we trust will be interesting to the reader.

CHAPTER XVI.

From yonder vale those well-known sounds arise,
  Which touch my heart, and fill my glance with tears,
Striking the string that in my bosom lies,
  Attuned to all my early hopes and fears.
This meadow gale, which breathes upon my brow,
  Is still as sweet and fresh in all its pow'r,
As when in happy days it used to blow
  On the smooth front of manhood's dawning hour.
Untouched, unchanged, the verdant vale will be,
  Long after I my pilgrimage have done;
Long after lips have ceased to speak of me,
  Long after love, light, life, and hope are gone.

THE birds were singing blithely in the orchards, woods, and hedges in the vicinity of the Grove Farm, and the surrounding prospect smiled in the sun with every promise of rural felicity. The only circumstance which had dis-

turbed the peace of that retired neighbourhood was a report that its shady and sequestered lanes and by-ways were watched and haunted by a monster in the shape of man, who had more than once terribly assaulted and beaten both male and female, brandishing a long knife in his hand, and crying out that he was come to be revenged. Owing to this report, the women of the village and of the surrounding country were afraid to venture forth after dusk, while the men were unwilling to move, unless in parties of two or three.

Susan Linden had settled quietly down to the enjoyment of her restoration to her home, and so constant had been her attendance at church, and so truly penitent did she appear, that good Master Comfortem, the curate, after remaining aloof for some little time, hovering around like a bird over a tempting bait in a cage yet fearing to trust his wings within the wires, once more resumed his attentions, and played to her

on his flute as assiduously as ever — the latter being a sure sign, so the neighbours said, that love had not been altogether banished from his bosom.

On the afternoon of the day of which we are speaking, Susan and her sister had promised to meet the curate in a neighbouring summer-house, formerly their favourite resort. Situated on an eminence immediately above the river, it was a delightful spot whence a wide view of field and flood could be obtained; here, in by-gone days, she had read and studied under the superintendence of the admiring pastor, or listened to the softened notes of his flute, as they died away in or mingled with the rippling of the wide waters of the Thames. At the moment on which Susan and her sister were about to leave the farm to keep their appointment, a long-promised though then an unexpected visitant arrived in the shape of Charles Sandron, which of course detained them; the summer-house

was, therefore, for some little period alone occupied by Master Comfortem.

Hoping to surprise Susan by what he termed "a treat," the good little man had brought with him a basket of cakes and fruit, and a flask of wine, when, having placed it on a table, he quietly seated himself and commenced touching a note or two on his flute, after the manner of harmonious signal to her who seemed to loiter by the way. Master Comfortem had not been long thus agreeably employed, when a hurried, though at the same time as far as the sound of it went, a stealthy footstep approaching the summer-house met his ear, and he arose with a blush of pleasure to greet the arrival of the fair friend he so anxiously expected: a far different object met his view.

On the sill of the door there stood, effectually preventing all hope of retreat, a wild, haggard, and ferocious-looking man, whose beard had been unshorn for some days, and whose long

and uncombed elf-locks overshadowed his features to such an extent, as to leave the observer totally at a loss as to the age of the man before him.

"I have found you at last," the stranger exclaimed, fixing his bloodshot and glaring eyes on the poor curate, who all aghast had staggered back as far as the limits of the little summer-house permitted. "I have found you at last, ay! and in one of your polluted dens! The hour of retribution has at length arrived; lay aside that damnable instrument of delusion (pointing to the flute), draw your sword, and come over the water and fight with me."

As he said this, he drew from his belt a long, pointed knife, and turned it once or twice on the edge of the table as if sharpening the weapon.

"Friend, good worthy friend!" cried Master Comfortem, trembling from head to foot, "I am no fighter, I have no den, neither is my touch

pollution. Thou dost mistake me for some other person; probably an exciseman, or one, according to thy contraband conception, deserving death for having seized on thy forbidden spirits; I am not such a man, but only the simple curate of the village."

"What!" exclaimed his stern interrogator, "dost thou deny thy name? do I not know thee by the mark upon thy brow? thou art Lord Lovat; and if thou dost attempt to evade the combat or gainsay me by a single contradiction, I will not mind the staining of this floor with thy dark blood, but even slay thee where thou dost stand."

"Animum picturâ pascit inani; he takes me for another," muttered the curate; "oh, that I could find a loophole to escape! Assuredly this is some desperate smuggler, or, perhaps, the monster that hath beset our lanes; truly, he may be mad. Dear heart, dear heart, what shall I do!"

Possessed with this last idea, Master Comfortem raised his voice. "Good excellent friend, I will neither fight nor contradict thee; verily art thou not taken with gay things? dost thou not love the flowers? lo! yonder in the fields beneath are many sweet herbs; let me go forth, and bring them to thee."

"No!" shouted the madman, if such he was, in a voice of thunder, at the same time closing the door behind him; "I will have no devil's arles from thee; how have they prospered with Susan Linden? Have they not lured her to her fall? Hath not thy wicked witchcrafts robbed Heaven of its own, and laid its bright possession prostrate in the path of man?"

"Nay, by my word, good youth, I have *not* robbed or wronged a soul; 'a fonte puro, pura defluit aqua'—'deceit cannot flow from me;' I beseech thee be composed; towards the maiden thou hast mentioned I am full of yearnings and of love."

"Hah!" exclaimed the other, in a voice of much eager curiosity and speaking almost in a whisper, "dost thou *really* love her? Come; I love her too; we will be brothers for a time;" so saying, he pulled the curate to the bench and sat down beside him. "Listen," he continued, "and tell me if thy love is such as mine, or if thou hast done as much to gain her. When first I saw her there was a something came in at my eyes—I have often thought it must have been a ray from her's—it ran through my veins, warmed my blood, beat in my pulses, and at last gathered itself together in my heart, where it lived in the shape of a beautiful star. Well, it seemed to me to have its risings and its settings the same as the visible sun. When I went to bed at night it was the last thought I had, and blazed as gloriously over every other recollection of the day, as the sun does over all other objects when it sets behind the hills, or beneath the sea without a cloud to stain its majesty. In

the morning, when I awoke—I used to sleep then — with returning consciousness came this same bright star, breaking out upon and dispelling the mists of slumber, kissing and gilding each successive imagination and cheering my brain, as the sun this morning did the prospect, when it banished the darkness of night, tinted the hill-tops, touched the steeples, glittered on the river, and dried the grass on which my head had rested. That star was the watch-fire, the beacon by which the smiling infant, hope, my own sweet hope, warmed its graceful limbs and grew into perfection. Hadst thou any such star in thy bosom?"

"Verily, good youth," replied the curate, with much hesitation, "dolus versatur in generalibus—that is—I would say — thine imagination is somewhat more figurative than mine. I cannot affirm that either watch-fires or beacons burned in me; not but that my cheeks have warmed on the approach of Susan Linden,

and, peradventure, I have been occasionally elated."

"Occasionally elated!" rejoined the other; "peace, and hear me! There came a man in spurs and plumes, and accompanied by the devil in the shape of a beautiful gipsy; he danced, I saw him dance and draw spells around my love; I knew that he was my rival, that man was Lord Lovat, was yourself—*you* were then my enemy, as *you* are now for a time my brother. A day was appointed by Fate—you know him, do you not? he rules in a court of law, with a wig and gown upon his huge limbs—a field was appointed, and he who could first reach Susan was to live with her for ever. We ran, we rushed to gain the prize; some demon deceived me in the course I took—instead of clasping Susan in my arms, I seized her shadow, while thou, aided by thy long plumes and jingling spurs, strained to thy bosom those real charms the loss of which have made me wretched.

I have ever kept that shadow with me—ha, ha, ha! thou canst not rob me of that! what *thou* hast of Susan will perish; *my* shadow never can. Thou hast the limbs, only the perishable limbs, while I possess the imperishable, the ethereal spirit. There is constancy in the shadow. When I stand in the gay sun or in the pleasant moonlight, that shadow reciprocally shares each blessing; it comes to me, it returns the signs I make to it of admiration; it is motionless, like myself, if so addressed by others; it walks with me, sits by my side, kneels, and we lie down together. In freedom, in the fields it accompanies me; ay, and when they seized me and dragged me to a madhouse, and called me fool, they could not shut my shadow out, but the sweet constant spirit came even through the bars of the iron-grated window, and when I wept and bowed my head, or raised my hand to dry my streaming eyes, it did the same, and sat and sorrowed with me. I am tired of this world, and so art thou;

but hush, hush! there she is," he continued, with a look of the utmost excitement, pointing to the wall behind them, on which the shadow of Master Comfortem only was cast by the slanting beam of the western sun; "see, she is come for the interchange of our mutual affection." Thus saying, the unfortunate Nutton knelt on the ground, and made a sign of supplication. "Ha," he cried, starting to his feet, "my love is motionless! sweet spirit, dost thou not know me?"

Master Comfortem raised his hand to his brow to wipe off the large drops of terror which had gathered there, the shadow did the same.

"Hell and fury!" yelled the madman, seizing him by the collar; "villain, hast thou too supplanted me here? she answered *thy* greeting, not *mine;* but I'll cut that grasping heart from out thy blackened bosom."

The curate sank on the ground, and with him the cause of the excitement, when the sun

having travelled another point, the shadow of Nutton himself became visible. Master Comfortem, who retained his self-possession in a surprising degree, saw his advantage and pointed to the wall.

The madman turned, the shadow also moved, and a variety of frantic gestures and signs of worship having been made to it, and of course returned, he again addressed the curate. "Arise, brother, I am satisfied;" but to this reply his companion turned a deaf ear, and only clung the closer to the leg of the table. "Nay, then, thou art upon some of thy nefarious tricks, and who knows but that to avoid thy death thou art going to slip through the floor; lay hold on my garment, that when I look on my sweet spirit I may still be assured of thy presence." He seized the curate's hand and placed it on his knee.

"Anguillam caudâ teneo," murmured the latter, as he obeyed; "I have but a slippery

hold; oh, that the floor would open, and save me from perdition!"

The village-clock now struck the hour of eight, when Nutton, seizing his knife, started to his feet, and dragging Master Comfortem from the floor, exclaimed, "Brother, the hour of death hath arrived; shall we die here, or on the summit of yon bank which overhangs the river?"

"Do not let us die at all," replied the other; "or if we do," (a sudden thought seemed to strike him), let it be in all good fellowship—aperit præcordia liber—we will drink: come, let us eat, and be merry; here are cakes and fruit, not forgetting the juice of the foreign grape, and I am anhungered."

The madman paused as the cakes and wine were spread before him; then, flinging himself upon the provisions, he fed with an appetite which clearly betokened long abstinence from food. "Hah!" he exclaimed, holding the bottle in his hand, whence he had extracted a consi-

derable draught, "it is thy turn now; brother, I will give thee the health of the devil."

"Will not some other toast do, most strange Arbiter Libendi? truly it is not a comfortable one."

"Thou villain!" roared the other, seizing the poor curate in his arms, all the nerves of which were braced with the tenacity of madness, "I have dallied with thee too long; by thy refusal to drink that toast, thou hast shown that thou wouldst even cheat thy master;" so saying, the madman, like a rapacious bird bearing its prey in his talons, rushed with his struggling victim from the summer-house down a neighbouring dell, and in the direction of a high mound of earth, which, with thickly-wooded sides, arose abruptly from the more even line of coast, and towering high, supported by the crumbling cliff of chalk, seemed absolutely to lean over the running waters.

At this moment, Charles Sandron, accompa-

nied by Susan and her sister, approached the spot. They walked immediately to the summer-house, as if in search of Master Comfortem, and were much amused at the havoc they deemed him singly to have made in the wine and provisions.

It was a beautiful evening; the sun had gone down in one unclouded blaze of crimson light, rendered perhaps of an unusually blood-red hue by the intervention of the smoke which arose like a thick fog over the distant city; Gravesend could scarce be seen amidst the gloom, and Tilbury Fort was lost in the exhalations of the low land on that side of the river. There was scarcely a breath of air to fill the sails of the vessels which were now coming up with the evening tide, yet, borne on the bosom of the majestic waters, they moved on slowly and gracefully to their destination.

There are few sights more imposing than that offered by the Thames, when its surface is

covered with the ships of all nations bearing in their freights to the market of the world; and when one reflects how many eyes may be affectionately watching and straining on the approaching vessels, to distinguish the sea-worn home of those whom they love, the scene becomes invested with an interest which finds its way to the heart of every man. The evening was still as death, only interrupted by the occasional "yeo ho!" of the sailors, or by the hoarse command of some pilot as he gave his brief directions, and the party in the summer-house sat silently gazing on the scene, soothed and impressed by the simple grandeur it presented. Many minutes had not passed, when they were disturbed by a shriek so piteous, so agonizing, and in such close proximity, that Sandron started to the door of the summer-house.

On the summit of the mound bordering immediately on the flood, their figures coming out in full relief against the glare of the western

horizon, were Nutton and the poor curate, the former with a drawn knife also in his hand, holding the latter suspended by the neck and knee over the run of tide beneath, and apparently about to hurl him headlong to eternity.

Sandron lost not a moment, but plunging down the declivity made straight for the objects he had seen, while Susan and her sister, shrieking, implored the madman to forbear; he heard, he recognized their voices and seemed to hesitate in his purpose. All this time, Master Comfortem more dead than alive continued to pray for assistance, interlarding his discourse with scraps of latin, which, on any other occasion, would have afforded infinite amusement to his hearers.

Susan's well-known accents seemed for a brief space to have the effect of absorbing all the attention of Nutton, and motionless, with his victim still held across his thigh, he continued to gaze down upon her. It was a moment of deep interest; Sandron's ascent on the side of

the high mound could be discerned by the progressive shaking of the copse wood, as he seized each stem to assist him, and his figure was at last seen to emerge from the brushwood on the small spot of table-land which crowned the eminence. It was not more than a couple of yards square, and a struggle of any sort was attended with danger.

Sandron, with the speed of thought, seized on the curate; at the same moment an extraordinary appearance of rationality passed over and lingered briefly on the brow of the madman; it seemed as if there suddenly flashed upon his mind the reminiscence of what he *might* have been and what he was; of the pleasant past, and of the bitter present; it was more than his shattered brain could bear; when, loosing his hold on Master Comfortem, he waved his hand to Susan, but at the same time plunged the knife into his breast. Springing a yard into the air, he fell headlong from the cliff, and was

overwhelmed in the strength of the rolling water. Sandron gazed on the spot where the suicide had disappeared; the ripple caused by the weight of the body soon mingled with and was lost in the wash of the tide. One arm alone became visible, uplifted, it lingered for an instant above the wave, then disappeared for ever. The shriek of terror, the pang of death, had passed, and all was once more calm and beautiful.

Sandron now looked round for Master Comfortem, but that excellent divine had lost no time in slipping through the hands of his preserver, at the moment of the terrible act we have recounted, and in removing himself from his dangerous situation; he had joined Susan, into whose ear he was endeavouring to pour a strain of consolation. It was for the time in vain. Christian duty and unmurmuring resignation were eloquently recommended; the curate asserted that she was bound to regard every act

as the will of Heaven, and ordained for some good purpose, but Susan thought that she was the origin of the sin she had seen committed, nor could that wide field attributed to the will of providence, on which so many miseries are so unsparingly laid, ease the pang of her self-reproach, which, like an internal wound, defied all outward remedy.

No hope of rescuing the unfortunate Nutton appearing, Sandron returned with Susan and her sister to the farm, and recommending Master Comfortem to be sedulous in his attentions in this her hour of remorse, and having added all the consolatory advice in his power, he returned to London where a letter was awaiting his arrival.

CHAPTER XVII.

My breast has been all weakness—is so yet;
But still I think I can collect my mind;
My blood still rushes where my spirits set,
As roll the waves before the settled wind;
My heart is feminine, nor can forget—
To all, except one image, madly blind:
So shakes the needle, and so stands the pole,
As vibrates my fond heart to my fix'd soul.

BYRON.

THE letter which awaited him was from his father, it required his presence at the Hall, and contained a brief account of the attempt made upon the life of the gipsy. The evening being so far advanced, however, he postponed his journey till the next day. Daylight then found him in the saddle, when, as he was passing Charing Cross, he caught a glimpse of the figure of Master Sur-

face bearing his left arm in a sling, and proceeding in the direction of White Hall; scarcely noticing this occurrence, after a few hours' riding he presented himself to his parents. Sir Stamford was still in a state of much fidgetty excitement, not being able to convince Lady Sandron that the shot was aimed only at the gipsy, who was evidently about to communicate more than seemed satisfactory to the eavesdropper. Nothing could convince the good old lady that the shot had not been directed at the window rather than at the figure beneath it, and with a resolution that they were all "*without knowing it*" to be murdered in their beds, she refused to listen to any species of consolation.

Charles found much to interest him in the tale of the gipsy; assured that it could be no other than Corah, he had good reason to know how well affected she was towards his interests, and that she had already served him at the im-

minent risk of her life. Her allusions to himself, to Louisa, to Lady Monkton, and Master Surface, who, in the gipsy's phrase, "had trumped upon them all," were too evident, and for the first time his eyes were opened as to the general conduct and probable designs of his former friend. The old deerhound who was in a fair way of recovering from his wound had seized the person who had fired the pistol at Corah, and had evidently lacerated some part of his person, as the blood-stained remnant of linen which remained entangled round his teeth proved beyond the possibility of doubt; added to this, Charles Sandron had seen that Master Surface supported his left arm in a sling: these circumstances combined, brought him to the conclusion that the latter gentleman was the intended assassin.

It required all the reasoning and authority of Sir Stamford to restrain his fiery son from returning immediately to London, to accuse Master

Surface to his face, and to require at his hands a heavy atonement for the crimes and conduct imputed to him. After a time, however, Charles became more cool, and, when he reflected that all the proof he had of Surface's criminality was slightly circumstantial, or entirely based on the vague hints of a wandering gipsy, he saw how premature would be any such proceeding on the present face of affairs. He contented himself therefore with a resolution to seek for further evidence.

We will now return to Lady Monkton and Louisa. In a prettily picturesque cottage in the vicinity of Twickenham, where the lawn in front ran sloping down to the clear and sparkling brink of the Thames, and not far from the site of Pope's Villa, were the two ladies : they had evidently by their attire just come in from the garden, and Louisa Marmaduke seemed labouring under some momentary excitement, indeed her features expressed indignant yet tearful emo-

tion. Lady Monkton was seated in a chair, but her niece had thrown herself on her knees, and while she looked anxiously into the face of her chaperone, supported herself in her position by resting her hands in the lap of that more experienced friend. Lady Monkton continued her exhortation.

"Well, my love, and if Master Surface *has* proposed to you, and has offered to share with you his title and his wealth, for I know he has a title, though he has reasons at the present moment for not assuming it, is that offer an insult that you should thus fly from his presence, and leave him yonder in the garden like one who had been guilty of some deep offence? For shame, Louisa! I had hoped you had left off these childish fancies and conceits, and that you were disposed to listen to an offer of which most young ladies of your age might well be proud. A title, fortune, good looks! indeed, I see no very grave offence in offering to lay them at your feet!"

"Oh, my dear Lady Monkton," replied Louisa, "ask me not to listen to his proposals, they are hateful to me. He may be gifted as you say he is—he may be in all respects eligible—but still, when he attempts to address me on the score of his professed affection, there is a cold sensation, a gloom which sits so heavily on my heart, as to banish every kindlier emotion."

"I am vexed with you," said Lady Monkton rising abruptly from her chair, and pacing across the room, while Louisa's hands and even her face at the same time fell upon the vacated seat, "I am thoroughly vexed with your want of spirit and blinded bigotry in favour of that worthless Master Sandron. What! are you always to live a rejected but faithful slave?"

"Nay, my dear aunt," replied the weeping girl, "you wrong me, indeed you do, I have no thought on Charles Sandron, we have separated for ever; but because I no longer love him is that any reason why I should fix my affections

upon another. Oh no, I promise you that, were Charles by my side at this moment, I would treat him as a stranger, but more I could not do."

"Well, then, my love," rejoined Lady Monkton, in a much softer tone, "I will not ask you *at present* to return Master Surface's affection, all I request of you is, that for my sake you bear with his society, and treat him at least with civility and attention."

"I will, I will," exclaimed Louisa, rising and throwing herself into the arms of her aunt, "I will bear with any thing for your sake, but oh do not let Master Surface or any one speak to me of love, for as a bird bereft of its tender young sorrows and droops when it finds its nest deserted, so mourns my heart over the loss of its earliest affections."

Lady Monkton then made something approaching to a promise, and led her from the house, when they joined Master Surface in the garden. They then continued their walk, and,

in spite of the deprecatory looks of Louisa, Lady Monkton addressed Master Surface as follows.

"My niece has informed me of your proposal to her, and I confess that it has given me much gratification. You must allow for the alarm which such passages occasion to a young and sensitive mind, but believe me, I trust one day to see you united."

"It would be the happiest hour of my life," eagerly exclaimed Master Surface, but with a timid and respectful glance at Louisa, "my whole soul should be devoted in an endeavour to render her happy; most men are selfish—all are so, more or less—but I would endeavour to prove an exception to the general rule, and to show at least how sincerely, how devotedly, I could dedicate my existence to her service. Oh, I could weep, (stamping with apparent vexation on the ground), man as I am—worldly and experienced—when I think of the falsehood

and depravity of my sex, of those—ay! of *that* man who could turn his back on an affection fostered through infancy and cherished in maturer years, at the moment when that affection had arrived at sufficient maturity to disclose to discover to him its retiring, its modest, but deeply-tinted dies!"

Louisa, worn down as she was by constant repining, and by the everlasting exhortations of her aunt, at this pointed allusion to her immediate situation with Charles Sandron burst into tears. She leant on Surface's arm, who led her to a seat, and when she raised her eyes again Lady Monkton had departed. Forlorn and friendless, broken in heart, and subdued in spirit, yet still assailable to that powerful prompter of the acts of woman — pique, Louisa stirred not; she sat at Master Surface's side and suffered him to take her hand. Surface, skilled in the intricacies of the human heart, saw and took advantage of Louisa Marmaduke's momentary situation.

"And will you not then listen to me," he exclaimed; "to one who would never give you cause for sorrow, who can appreciate your worth, and honour your sincerity; to one who would never crush the bud of promise when he saw it about to bloom, but who would on the contrary cherish, entice, and lead its blessed flower to perfection? Oh! place me in the envied position of him who has so basely slighted the treasure you would have bestowed, and sweetest lady, let me hope that you will one day deem favourably of my proposal."

Louisa replied not; lassitude prevented her from making an effort to alter her position; her fancied wrongs were rising in her heart, and threatening to overwhelm all better resolution. Surface had raised her hand towards his lips, when the hedge which separated the garden from an adjoining meadow parted with a crash; and a gipsy-girl, wild, wayworn, but never-

theless beautiful, suddenly stood before them. Surface started to his feet, and menaced Corah with his hand, but all heedless of his threat, in accents of deep and concentrated emotion, she thus addressed him.

"Villain! traitor! outlaw! wouldst thou add another crime to the long list already blackening on thy soul?" then turning to Louisa, "My lady, sweet young lady, listen to him not, for he has a tongue to wile even gold from the close hand of a miser. Oh! for words to tell half the falsehood that is in his disposition, but such powers of speech are even beyond the comprehension of a gipsy. He has asked you to wed him; could you bind yourself to one who is driven from his caste and banished from his country; who has heard the voice of outraged woman shriek to him in vain, and who at this moment lives — the husband of an unhallowed bed? would you cast from you, now and for ever, all chances that remain of happiness?

Avoid him, I implore you shun him, for his very touch is pollution."*

While the gipsy thus spoke, Surface recovered his self-possession, and resumed his seat, at the same time throwing into his manner an air of pity rather than of anger; when she concluded he exclaimed, "Away, poor girl, we have nothing for you!" then, turning to Louisa, he assured her that the gipsy was mad, driven so by an accumulation of all sorts of crime and misery.

"Mad, am I?" Corah cried in a voice trembling with passion; "*was* I mad when I refused to listen to your disgraceful offers? was I mad when I saved the life of Charles Sandron? was I mad when I warned his parents against your deceitful practices? Oh, lady! he may *call* me mad, he may persuade you to believe it, but, had I the power to do so, I would tear from his left arm the vest, the bandage that is beneath it, and shew the recent wound left by the teeth of the faithful hound, who, at the Hall, has

* See State Trials.

often lain at your feet and licked your hand. That wound was inflicted not many hours since when he who now sits by your side attempted my life — here, here, believe me or not as you will, but behold that the mark of sin is upon him."

So saying, Corah suddenly rushed upon Surface and endeavoured to tear open the left arm of his doublet. Stung to fury, and losing all command over himself, he struck Corah a violent blow with the hilt of his sword, which felled her to the ground. Louisa, flying from the spot on this act of violence, gained the house and her chamber with the speed of her own white doe. To the house she was instantly followed by Master Surface, whose voice reached her loud in command to the servants, to repair to the garden and secure the person of a mad woman who had attacked their young mistress.

His directions were in part obeyed; the garden and even the village were searched, but not a gipsy could be met with; either carried away by

some of her tribe, or effectually concealed near the spot, Corah for the time escaped all further observation.

Master Surface now informed Lady Monkton of the interruption they had received, requesting her to assure her niece that all she had heard from the gipsy was but the wild and incoherent imagining of a distempered brain, and that when she had had time to recover from the shock which the appearance of so unfortunate a creature might have occasioned, he would again return and explain all to her satisfaction; at present, it might perhaps be better for him to depart, the more so as he had important business in London: then, taking a respectful and studied leave of Lady Monkton, he withdrew.

When Louisa Marmaduke reached the sanctity of her own apartment, she flung herself upon the bed in an agony of tears; it was as if the words of the gipsy had awakened her from a trance in which her mind had been haunted with horrid

visions. She now could hardly look back upon the passed occurrence and believe it possible that under any circumstances she could have been induced to listen to the suit of Master Surface. The idea also of Charles Sandron's life having been in danger called up a thousand tender reminiscences, and for the hour at least dispelled all more rigid resolution. That there was some truth in the gipsy's accusation of Master Surface she felt convinced; or why had her allegations had so much effect in beguiling him of his usual self-possession?

In the midst of such reflections Lady Monkton entered her chamber, and in her usual style, wherever Master Surface was concerned, began to treat the matter as a jest, or as favourably to one party as possible. She laughed at Louisa's belief in the incoherent charges of what she termed the mad gipsy, and stated how fortunate it was that Master Surface had been present, else they might have been robbed and ill-treated

by others of the wandering tribe who no doubt were lurking in the vicinity. But her representations had now less effect than ever, and Louisa Marmaduke was deaf to all that Lady Monkton could advance in favour of Master Surface.

CHAPTER XVIII.

————Was a sordid soul,
Such as does murder for a meed:
Who, but for fear, knows no control,
Because his conscience, sear'd and foul,
Fears not the import of the deed;
One whose brute feeling ne'er aspires
Beyond his own more brute desires.

SCOTT.

SURFACE, having mounted his horse, proceeded at a slow musing pace through the village of Twickenham, but, instead of turning to the right towards London, he struck into a more unfrequented lane, terminating at length in a wide common, which at that time was but a continuation of Hounslow Heath. Night was now closing in, and the harmless summer lightning

played in different quarters of the horizon. All was still, the wheeling plover had settled by her callow young, tired with her anxious efforts through the day to lead the roving gipsy-boy from her brood, and not a tree was near to wave its dewy leaves in the sigh of the scarcely palpable wind. How unlike to the calm placid face of nature was the breast of Master Surface! in it raged a chaos of disquietude — a blazing furnace lit by the curse of God.

Famed for its danger by night as Hounslow Heath then was, by the careless way in which Surface threaded the maze of furze, he at least apprehended none; and when his horse stopped short and pricked his ears at some dark object laid across the path, the rider instead of drawing his sword appealed only to his spurs; those he plunged recklessly into the quivering sides of his steed, and, in spite of rears and demivolts, forced him up to the object which inspired terror.

As the horse neared the dark mass it rose, and proved to be an ass, with its fore-legs tethered so as to prevent its wandering during the night. On observing this, Surface reigned in his steed and gave a loud and peculiar whistle. The signal was replied to from a little distance, and looking to ascertain whence the sound proceeded, the tops of some high furze-bushes were evidently illumined by a steady red glare which seemed the reflection from a low fire beneath them. Surface immediately advanced in that direction, when he was met by a boy, who without speaking offered to hold his horse. Having dismounted, he passed on, and the single tent of a gipsy met his view.

Stretched on the ground, his haggard and sinewy throat bare, and his muscular but wasted limbs disposed to rest, lay Smith, the husband of Corah: at his feet were couched a lurcher, and one or two smaller dogs of an indefinite breed, while by his side lay a heavy bludgeon.

When this man recognized Surface, he raised his hand to his forehead and touched a lock of his grisly hair in token of respect, but ere he could speak, Surface seated himself by the fire.

"Well," said the latter, in a tone of angry scorn, "your better-half has played the devil."

"Well," echoed the gipsy sullenly, "and if she has, you have no one to thank for it but yourself; you were always making too much of her, and I knew it; but you paid for it, so it mattered but little to me."

"Is Corah here?" demanded Surface.

"No," said the other, "I supposed she was gone on some fool's errand for you."

"Hark ye, Smith," said Surface, "you are playing fine gentleman. You are giving yourself airs, and speaking to your betters in a way they will not put up with; let me have no more of this, or I will very speedily bring you to your senses."

"Ho! ho!" cried the other, raising himself on

his arm, and sitting bolt upright, at the same time grasping his bludgeon ; "and what should prevent my beating you *out* of *your* senses, my hero ?—not law, certainly ; this is a lonely place and a dark hour, with a deep stream running near, and I have one or two scores to wipe out which are chalked on your back."

"What should prevent you ?" calmly replied Surface ; "why simply this (producing a pistol); you know that if you stirred hand against me, I would blow your brains out, and who, think you, would inquire of what became of a thieving gipsy ? What verdict do you suppose the coroner Raven and his jury of carrion crows would give as they sat on your carcase ? why, that on the neighbouring gibbets, one of which you may hear creaking even in this still night, they had before tasted much such venison."

Smith, grasping his tremendous bludgeon, jumped to his feet, while, pistol in hand and steadily presenting it, Surface did the same.

They glared on each other for a moment, and Surface again spoke sneeringly, but in a milder tone.

"Come, come, Master Smith, no quarrelling among friends; you are more useful to me alive than you would be dead. I am the same to you, sit down therefore, lay aside that dogged humour, and converse like a rational man. Corah is abroad on no mission of mine; can you not divine the errand which has taken her away?"

"No," said Smith, again reposing himself by the fire, as if he knew that bullying was of little avail; "I know not what she is up to, may the fiend take me if that youngster of Sandron Hall has not turned her head! ever since she made his acquaintance she has changed her feathers and come out a new bird; wandering about by night when she has no call to do so, and gazing, as she says, upon Nature's face, for all the world as if she was a player-woman: she's not a bit of good to the camp, rot me, if I can make her out!"

"Well, then," rejoined Surface, "though I did not employ her, I know *what* she has been doing," and then he recounted the passage of the evening.

"Bramble her body!" exclaimed Smith; "but, hush! she comes — for the dogs, who are all fond on her, more particularly the little red one, Spider, as she calls him, never leave the tent at this hour unless she approaches. Corah!" he exclaimed, peering round the tent into the darkness beyond —"Corah, are you there!" No answer was returned to this inquiry, and the dogs came back and resumed their former station. "Well, as I was saying," resumed the ruffian, "bramble her body but I'll make her repent it; I'll rub her down with such a towel as sha'n't leave a whole bone in her body, I will!"

"No, no, Smith," said Surface, "you need not do that; listen, you say she is of no use to your camp, and that the sight of some young fellow has turned her head; you cannot then have much affection for her?"

"Affection! how should I when I get nothing by her? Affection, as you call it, is all very well when liquor and grub comes in by it and it brings a living; but when a woman can't get none of them there necessaries, why she is neither flesh nor fowl, nor good red herring as I knows on. Affection, bramble my body, who ever heard of affection on empty stomachs and pockets to let?"

"Well argued, my doughty Smith; she is of no sort of value to you, then, whatever. Has she not a single good quality in your eyes?"

"Yes, mayhap she has," said the gipsy, with surly hesitation.

"What is it?" asked Surface.

"Why, the gold is not coined as could buy her; she would not sell herself or betray me."

"Would she sell herself *with* your permission?"

"I don't think she would."

"Will *you* sell *her?* here, look upon these gold pieces, they are your's if you will."

The gipsy hesitated for some moments, till the very dogs seemed to look up with wonder.

The question was repeated — "Will you sell her?"

"*Yes*," was the miserable reply; "but it must be done legally, else she will return upon my hands; I will lead her with a halter into the market at Brentford to-morrow, and you may have her if you will."

The gipsy received a small portion of the price as earnest money. There was then a sound in the furze at the back of the tent, as of some one rushing through; the dogs started off in the same direction, but all further noise was drowned by the snorting and prancing of Master Surface's horse, who seemed to have been alarmed by some passing object.

"What was that?" exclaimed Smith, starting up and gazing into the depths of the surrounding night. "The little dog has bolted, and it seemed as if some one ran from the very tent itself —

probably one of the boys — Well, sir, I have made up my mind; Corah is your's if you like to fetch her from the market."

"Agreed," rejoined the other, "fail not to be there, and now my horse." So saying, Master Surface mounted and turned his back upon the tent.

How often do we see the best intentions frustrated, how frequently have the surest-footed horses fallen, when the hand that reined them was governed by the most virtuous resolutions; yet, in this instance, as in a thousand others, sin sat enthroned upon the saddle, and prospered in the contemplation of villany!

On that wild Heath, over that rough ground, on the lonely spot where the voice of innocence, where the oppessed female had cried in vain for relief from brutal violence, where the honest, the religious man had been robbed and murdered, not a danger, not a hand arose to stint the course of him who now, fresh from an unholy

contract, traced his gloomy way. With the worst feelings of human nature corroding in his heart, Master Surface gained the high road, when, to be ready for the morning's purchase and to arrange his plans with some of his creatures, he put up at a little hostelry in the vicinity of Hounslow.

The waning moon shone placidly on the village of Twickenham and danced brightly on the current of the Thames, as the murmuring waters wound swiftly on their way, as if in obedience to the distant call of the Ocean. Feverish, restless from the occurrences of the day, Louisa rose from her bed, and wrapped in a shawl was sitting at the open window.

It is impossible for the human heart, when unalloyed by evil passions, not to harmonize with the face of nature; there is a sympathy connecting the soul with the soft blue sky that needs no interpretation, and Louisa looked in the heavens and felt resigned, if not absolutely happy.

Musing thus for some time, she was suddenly aroused by the smart rap of a small pebble against the glass above her head; turning her eyes to the gravel walk beneath, she beheld a female figure accompanied by a little dog, in the act of beseeching her attention, nor was she long in recognizing Corah. The gipsy addressed her—

"My lady, my good young lady, let me speak to you but for five minutes; I have that to tell you which concerns you much, and which you will like to hear; believe me, I am not dealing in mysteries now, neither am I the mad creature some would have you to suppose."

With her curiosity much awakened, and deeply interested in the beautiful and extraordinary girl before her, Louisa spoke kindly and assured the gipsy that she might say anything she pleased.

"Well then, my lady, I have fled from my tent and left the lone Heath to warn you of your

danger; even now I dread pursuit, for I have escaped from those whom neither cunning or prudence can baffle for any length of time. You cannot marry the man you spoke to to-day, he is already wedded alike to woman as to sin, and, in addition to this, he has embarked in adventures as disgraceful as they are dangerous. I have sworn not to reveal his name, but he is an outlaw, accursed of God and man, and little worthy to aspire to such a hand as your's. Oh listen to him not, but turn your eyes to one who lived with you in infancy and who loves you now as you love him, though circumstances, art, and avarice, have combined to make you each think otherwise. It is to Charles Sandron that I allude."

"Hush, hush," replied Louisa, "mention him not, or I close the window and listen to you no more. My opinion as to his conduct is not formed on the report of others, but by his own individual acts do I judge him, and through those alone

is he condemned. Speak, then, say any thing as regards me or of yourself, and I will hear you."

"Oh, my lady, I cannot tell you now, some other time I may; at present I must fly, or to-morrow brings me shame or death, for I will not outlive the shame if forced upon me. I am a gipsy; ruled by the wandering inclination of my tribe, I fled the proffered aid of strangers, and taught only to read, with no preceptor to direct my future study, I was turned an orphan upon the wide world, and forced to marry at an early age, when I hardly knew the meaning of the contract; how I suffered from it, yet how religiously I kept that vow, though assailed by each temptation, is known at least in heaven. The mind of him I married was not akin to mine; with repining years came cool reflection, and I saw the difference between us. Still, wealth or power could not have tempted me to wrong him. I had no one to counsel me, no one to

teach me, little to rule me but the dictates of conscience, and by my husband faithfully would I have lived and died; ay, though I know *now* what it is to love—but let that pass. I have been abused, reviled, and beaten, blows have I received in the face of our tribe; in the winter's frost and snow and beneath the summer's scorching sun have I been driven houseless from my tent to seek the shelter of the thicket. There, while cowering in the woods, and treated as a beast rather than as a rational creature, even then having nothing to blame myself for, and no sin to lay at my door, Heaven seemed to pity me, through the voice of its humblest messenger the gentle redbreast; the bird sat on the leaves at my foot, perched on the spray by my side, and seemed to whisper to me a Saviour's approbation. All, all my husband's ill-treatment of me I bore, and how have I been requited? This night, after I had crawled bleeding from the earth, where that villain Surface had left

me, and lain in the cool reeds on the river bank to restore my fainting senses, I sought my tent. The first thing that met my eye was a led horse, creeping cautiously forwards, the next thing I beheld was Surface in conversation with my husband. Oh God!" she exclaimed violently, departing from all tone of caution, "I was the subject of their discourse, and I was sold to Surface for a piece of money, to be delivered to him or whomsoever he might depute to receive me at the market-place in Brentford on the following day."

Corah here uttered an exclamation of surprise, and, pointing to the window, at which Louisa sat, dashed into the bushes. On looking up Louisa beheld the nightcap of Lady Monkton standing on end with astonishment, as she exclaimed — "With whom on earth are you conversing?"

"With the poor gipsy girl," was the calm reply; "nay, my dear aunt, you need not look,

you will not see her, for at your approach she vanished in the shadow of the trees. Would that you had arrived sooner that you might have heard every syllable she uttered !"

Lady Monkton now closed the window, and commenced a very edifying conversation on the absurdity of putting any faith in the representation of a gipsy ; but her niece appeared to think differently on that subject.

Master Surface rode into the town of Brentford at an early hour of the following day, when, putting his horse up at one of the inns, he walked as coolly into the market-place with an intention of completing his ungodly purchase, as if he had bargained for one of the beasts of the field. By the peculiar look of recognition with which he regarded one or two persons who seemed to be idling about, it was evident that others were employed by him to take possession of the expected victim. It was not long ere Smith made his appearance alone, and therefore unaccompanied by Corah.

"How now, sirrah!" exclaimed Surface, striding up to him, "have you changed your mind, and do you mean to retain your *useful* wife?"

"Retain her?" replied the other; "bramble her body, she has slipped her head out of the halter and bolted! Depend upon it she was playing beak to our confab last night, the dogs knew she was there, the little rough one has followed her away, *they* pointed her out, and I was a dolt not to believe them. Do n't you remember the noise we heard behind the tent?"

Surface regarded him for a moment with a look of incredulity, and there was a pause.

"What! you do n't believe it?" continued Smith; "ask the Scratcher who held your horse if he did not see some one pass him. She is gone as sure as you stand there, into the Thames may be, and then you or I will never be the better for her: my stars! she would sooner die than be sold, if she know'd it."

"I believe you," rejoined Surface, "I believe the only transaction in which you would not cheat would be the sale of your wife; mind, Smith, mark me well, if you ever gain possession of her, our bargain still holds good." So saying, he turned from the villain, and addressing a woman who stood near by the name of Mistress Hayes, and who was the same person whom the reader will recollect as having recognized Surface in the inn at Colnbrook, he remarked "that all was up, that the lark had flown and therefore the lines were set in vain."

Surface then sought his horse, and quitting Brentford, with the utmost effrontery rode back again to Twickenham and called upon Lady Monkton and Louisa, with a view to enter upon some explanation, or rather to gloss over with fresh falsehood the appearances which were so strongly against him. Disappointment also awaited him here, for though he sent in his name he was coldly denied admittance.

CHAPTER XIX.

Dear Nature is the kindest mother still,
Though always changing in her aspect mild;
From her bare bosom let me take my fill,
Her never-wean'd though not her favoured child.
Oh! she is fairest in her features wild,
Where nothing polish'd dares pollute her path;
To me by day or night she ever smiled,
Though I have mark'd her when none other hath:
And sought her more and more, and loved her best in wrath.

BYRON.

WE left Sandron at the Hall, on the cooler suggestions of his father resolved to seek, or at least to wait for further evidence against his quondam friend Master Surface, and determined on the first feasible opportunity to call that gentleman to a heavy reckoning. Ere he returned to

London, he proceeded to the Rectory with the intention of proving to his own satisfaction and for the peace of his own heart how completely he had cast off all semblance of affection for one who had been the first to slight him.

There is a sensation of melancholy ever attached to a sensitive mind, when, after an absence, short or not, or other vicissitude, it again visits the scene of childhood's happy hours. Each corner, every object reminds one of some early association or innocent pleasure, or of some kind friend since descended to the grave. Far different are the reminiscences connected with later years—the mind is not *then* so susceptible of impressions, or, if it is, its surface does not retain them so long, or perhaps it has become of too obdurate a quality to permit those impressions to strike sufficiently deep for them to acquire any tenacity. The pleasures of man are not apt to bear so satisfactory a reference to their nature, for they can scarcely be

so unsullied as those of the child. Man flies like the insect from flower to flower, seeking fresh excitement, and adopting one admiration so quickly upon another, that he can scarcely be said to have it in his power to point out or define from the rest a single more prominent pleasure, but the child sees the nursery of its fondest thoughts day by day, from year to year; is delighted by the same playground, pleased by the same expressions, and kissed by the same lips, without tiring of one or the other, and only learns—not to tire or to love the less, but to value and appreciate the sincerity around him. It is depressing, even at the earliest stage of manhood, to turn round in the path of life and look back upon the ranks, the forms as it were of the world, and see the long list of seats once filled by firm and vigorous friends, once cheered by warm and smiling faces, but now empty, and distinguished alone by the silence of death.

Sandron entered the Rectory garden. Its walks were grown up with weeds; the rabbit cropped the wild mignonette by the window, and, in the words of Scott, "Upon the hospitable hearth the hare had left her young." So far had a few brief weeks obliterated the acts of the once careful hand of man. On reaching the well-known summer-house, Sandron sat down: the creeping plants around it having in their spring-shoot reached above their former fastening were now drooping their heads, as if they mourned the excess of freedom at which they had been suffered to arrive. In one corner, probably where her hand had left it, lay the little basket from which Louisa used to feed her pets, between the handle and rim of which the lonely spider had now spread his thrifty web, while the wren, chirping from her nest in the roof, seemed to chide Sandron as an intruder. As he thus reclined and mournfully pondered over scenes, the morning blush of which had passed for ever, a

slight rustle among the rose-trees and shrubs of the border close at hand reached his ear, and presently two beautiful dark eyes gazed at him with timid curiosity from the leafy screen with which they were surrounded. It was the white doe. He called to her as he used to of old, held out his hand and endeavoured to entice her, but instead of approaching, though casting a wondering look as if she in part recognized his tone and manner, she remained shy, and inclined to bound away. In a gentler accent still he spoke, using such little endearing expressions as were peculiar to her mistress, and taking up the basket at the same time; when the deer, stealing softly forth, came timidly into the summer-house, touched with her lips the basket, and licked his hand. A few weeks had not made her forget a kind and lovely patroness; some such remark was busy with the brain of Sandron, for, running his hand over his eyes, he arose, and returning to the Hall proceeded at once to London.

Though his duty detained him much at Court, and attendance at all the fashionable parties now crowding fast upon each other, took up the greater portion of his time, he remained vigilantly seeking further news of Master Surface, who, however, now seemed to be possessed of invisibility, for though he was occasionally heard of, he was never to be met with. The period of the close of the session of parliament having become known, London was thinning fast of its better society, and but one entertainment remained, which was a ball given by Lord Jersey, then Lord Chamberlain to the queen.

CHAPTER XX.

More glorious sunnes adorne faire London's pride
Than all rich England's continent beside;
That who, t'account their multitudes, would wish,
Might number *Rumneyes* flowers, or *Isis* fish;
Who doth frequent our temples, walkes, and streetes,
Noting the sundry beauties that he meetes,
Thinks not that nature left the wide world poore,
And made this place the chequer of her store?

DRAYTON.

IT was late in the evening when Sandron, having fulfilled other engagements, found himself in a vast crowd, through the press of which he was scarcely able to move more than a few inches at a time. The party given by the Lord Chamberlain was not only made up of the elite of the fashionable world, but it also consisted of very many who were not remarkable for their

situation in society, but who, from their political connexion in the House of Commons, or with town or county, were deemed eligible by the noble host.

It was curious, it was lamentable to see how fast the rising and falling tide of the political sea was wearing away the confines, and disturbing the smooth surface of the hitherto placid lake of private society. On the first glance at the component parts of an assembly, a doubt would naturally arise as to whether it was convened for business or pleasure. At the party we are describing, very many from the best ranks of society were omitted, while in their places might be seen those whose countenances expressed perhaps an uneasy sense of gratification, while their limbs certainly were constrained and awkward; very excellent people in their way, but not such as could add to the tout ensemble of an assembly of this description. The queen had honoured the house of her Chamberlain with her presence,

and in her immediate vicinity, blazing in all the attractions which high birth, good breeding, and costly attire, could bestow, were the Duchesses of Ormond, Queensbury, and Hamilton, the Marchioness of Huntingdon, and the Countesses of Marlborough, Scarborough, Burlington, and Abingdon, with the Ladies Hyde, Spencer, Fretchville, Charlotte Beverwert, Harriet Godolphin, and many others, whom, as we do not look upon ourselves in the light of the Morning Post of that period, we think it unnecessary to name. We must not however forget the Lady Margaret Bonville, who stood alone and beautiful among that brilliant throng, as the star Venus does amidst the shining but less bright constellations of the skies around it. To be fully sensible of her splendid attractions it was necessary to see her surrounded by the best of society; to be conscious of her surpassing loveliness, to see her associated with the most beautiful creatures in creation.

There are very many women who look well in country places; the forest-girl in her own sweet wilderness is beautiful, but in the gorgeous saloon, where society takes its tone from the custom of the court, when to the lavish hand of Nature is added all that grace which constant practice alone can give, then it is that the mind and manner over which it rules surpasses gifts of feature, and places the really well-bred woman far above those who otherwise might equal her.

The *truly* graceful, lady-like, and courtly girl, is not a creature of art but of nature in its most beautiful perfection; that which is artful must be in some degree constrained and affected — and *any* affectation is vulgarity. How often do we see the lady this and that look well at their country ball, affecting universal affability to their country neighbours, which most of their country neighbours see through and duly appreciate, who, when met again in the best society in London, on comparison with others, their equals in every

sense of the word—which after all is the fairest and only real test—appear most dowdy and insignificant figures! Beauty is to be admired wherever the fortunate eye of man may meet with it—in field and forest, in the country and at court, it may receive just homage; and the hero of this history was one of those who could so appreciate it.

Sandron, in making his progress through the crowd, was met by more than one fair creature who purposely lingered in his vicinity that she might speak to him; nay, one whose charms were of no ordinary cast took from her bosom a flower which she fastened in his vest, and whispered, "Have you forgotten me?" but even then failed to detain him beyond the present moment. Passing by the young and the innocent, the practised coquette posted between the doors that she might see and be seen, or that her temporary slaves might not miss the shrine of their transient homage in the moving throng,

Sandron continued gradually on his way, like a skilful mariner steering to a given point, till at last he found himself seated by the side of the Ladies Sunderland and Marlborough.

A country dance was then in the midst of performance, and moving gracefully to the lively air might be seen the fair form of Lady Margaret Bonville. Sandron fixed his eyes upon her, and was lost in contemplation till recalled to more immediate matters by the soft voice of Lady Sunderland, who, perceiving the nature of his reverie, asked him.—

"Is she not too beautiful to-night?"

He had only time to acquiesce; when Lady Margaret looked in his direction, their eyes met in but a momentary glance; but, oh! ye chaperones, you may watch, you may ward, and select partners for those under your surveillance, but, until you can thwart the laws of nature, or get your husbands to bring in and carry a bill in the Commons House of Parliament for the

suppression of the expression, or for the better regulation of eyes, all your vigilance will be unavailing. There was nothing that was not pure and beautiful in the look which Lady Margaret gave Sandron; it was as if Heaven had stolen to his pillow in the silence of night, and in the shape of a confiding angel whispered assurances of brighter scenes than were visible to the world, for Sandron to his soul felt that he would sooner have shared in that momentary communion than in hours of more manifest attention. When the dance concluded, her partner, Lord Seton, led her towards Lady Sunderland, having by dancing with her obtained, if he wished it, the right to offer his attentions for the remainder of the evening, an arrangement in this instance to the lady as to Sandron peculiarly disagreeable. The quick eye of Lady Marlborough perceived this, and the matter was soon remedied: she made room for Lady Margaret between her and Charles Sandron; each of them being again

seated, there was no room for the partner of the dance. Lord Seton looked at Sandron, and paused for an instant as if he thought he would move, but as the latter with imperturbable gravity fixed his eyes on the point of his sword, and *would not* see any thing else, Lord Seton coloured and passed to a different part of the room. Conversation was then kept up between the three, when Lady Marlborough suddenly exclaimed —

"Oh! there is the most delightful man in existence approaching; do not start or be alarmed, my dear Lady Sunderland, but you will think him so when you know him."

On hearing this exclamation, Sandron turned and perceived, making his way through the crowd in their direction, with a sly observant motion and demeanour, him who had been so lately designated as the mad parson, but whose wit and humour were fast lifting him above the surrounding level of mankind. It was Swift, and Lady Marlborough took him by the hand. The

queen's departure was now signified; the band commenced the National Anthem; the ladies with whom Sandron had been in conversation were called on to attend their royal mistress, and he was left in the society of Swift. The latter began to soliloquize aloud, taking care, however, that his remarks reached no other than the ear of his immediate companion.

"And this, then, is one of your court balls; a pretty sample, truly, of the luxury, vice, and folly of the age—the elite of society indeed! why, I see around me men who have abided by the wine-pot a thought too late, who have sat too long over salmon and haunch; the epicure and the drunkard are here assembled, the titled gambler and the libertine. Why here be women ready to wed their daughters to the mammon of unrighteousness, to barter their best affections for a wedge of gold. Folly decked in riches to hide the poverty of the brain and playing wisdom — wisdom playing the fool.

Good youth Sandron, this is no place for us."

Without waiting for a reply he continued :—

"Here are boys, mere children, men alone by dress, who, having heard their elder brothers boast of their intrigues, are now paying marked attention to dames, fat, fair, and forty, and old enough to be their grandmothers, who, heretofore having practised such a life of flirtation, have worn off the edge of their husbands' jealousy, and induced him to disbelieve the evidence of his eyes. Oh ! what a threshing-floor this would be to cleanse of its abominations ! Good youth Sandron, let us gird up our loins and flee."

In saying this, Swift made no attempt to leave the place, but leaning his shoulder against a pillar, continued his observation.

"Were I but a captain of horse, I would whip some of these young lads, and send them away howling to their duty ; I see all that is passing, the tops of men's heads are off, the win-

dows of their hearts are open, and I can read their most secret thoughts."

"You will have ample study, then, most reverend pastor," replied Sandron; "and, as you find employment, so may you find more charity in your nature, for at present you see things with a jaundiced eye."

"Look here, good youth," said Swift, "turn your eye to yonder corner, see you not 'that novelty on earth, that fair defect of Nature,' as Milton so beautifully describes the creature: I mean that pretty married woman listening to a short lad with crooked legs, who, by his love-sick eyes, is evidently much enamoured: do you see she lends a pleased and willing ear to even homage such as that? Faith, what a pilot-fish she makes of him!"

"I see whom you mean," rejoined Sandron, "but why is he or what is a pilot-fish?"

"Why, most erudite Sandron, of that ilk," said Swift; "you must know that there is a

little fish familiar to sailors by that name, which ever attends on and appears attached to the shark, the latter seeming unwilling either to caress or hurt it. The appearance of the little fish proves the presence of the large one, and heralds the vicinity of a monster, inclined and ready to bite when a sufficiently tempting bait shall be offered. The pilot-fish hovers in the vicinity of the shark all day, at times sleeping on its huge fin, as that little man may be supposed to do when he sits so long in that lady's pocket."

"Well," asked Sandron, "suppose a tall captain of a man-of-war casts his line and catches the shark, what then becomes of the little attendant?"

"Why," replied Swift, "sailors say that so affectionately tenacious is the little thing, and so blinded by self-conceit to the folly of its position, that it will cling to the shark's fin, and be drawn up a short space with her, only to fall

back again into the ocean, and be lost among the shoals of the tribe to which it properly belongs. Lo, there, do you see? yon tall and proper man who appears to stand so calmly by, while the pilot-fish is amusing the eyes of the world, he has already cast his line and hooked the shark, and will wind her up at his pleasure. Hallo! look to the right, there passes a fish of another description — that is Mrs. Masham, the shark I have hitherto described was ready to take a bait gilded by rank, enhanced by wit, beautiful by proportion, or sweetened by fashion; this other fish will only rise to things perfumed in the court, or glossed by political power; she wishes to swim on the very crest of the wave, and cares not how firmly she may be hooked, provided the line attached will lead her there. Mark my words, young man, in spite of that woman's vulgarity, she will succeed in whatever she attempts, she has a winning duplicity about her, cares for no rebuff, angers not at defeat, but,

bending all her energies to the task, determined to stick at nothing, she, like my friends the Tories, will never be entirely discomfited." *

"*Your* friends the Tories," exclaimed Sandron; "why you are liberal in all your ideas."

"I am in *most* of them," said Swift; "men often are liberal when their liberality consists in words and empty assertions; I would be a thorough Whig, but for the threatened attack on the Church's patrimony, to that I will never consent. No, no; no lay appropriation of its funds; why! with that would go much of the comfort of my fireside."

"In short, my reverend pastor," replied Sandron, "you are liberal in all matters where you have nothing to give. Alas that it should be so! On my word there is such cant and selfish dishonesty of purpose in the political world, that, in disobedience to the behest of my late preceptor,

* We refer to a letter in the Correspondence of the Duchess of Marlborough for the origin of this remark.

I am much inclined to eschew a seat in Parliament, and to leave the contest to be determined by men who are willing to overmatch their antagonists by any means within their power. By my faith, most reverend sir, you have been *liberal* in your caustic observations on society to-night, though I trust that in your description of it you are like the bailiff who inspected a dairy-farm with a view to give others a bad impression of it. You have offended us with the farm-yard, you have pointed out the offal on the surface of the land, but you have wilfully forgotten the sweet herbage which, with a thousand flowers, rises flourishingly above it."

Swift shook his head and smiled, but immediately called Sandron's attention to another individual. "Faith," he exclaimed, "what have *I* friends here! There is a man I used to know when he was steward to a poor duke, an office I take to be the most lucrative on record, the stewards of *poor* noblemen *always* get rich; it

is a fact, a glaring fact, and I know many instances of it, while the steward of the rich man plods on with only a comfortable sufficiency. It is odd too that, give any man, however thin his person may be, the place of a steward, he is sure to grow fat. Witness the advice of the jester, when the steward of Lord Berkeley lamented* that there was a point on the hill above Tiley on which nothing would thrive; 'haste,' said the fool, 'and plant a steward there; they 'll thrive when all around grows bare.'"

As Swift said this, he advanced to speak to the person to whom he alluded, and Sandron wandered on through the suit of rooms now fast thinning of their numbers. Like a restless bee, who will search for treasures in the cup of the daisy when all the lovelier flowers are gone, Sandron sat by, entered into conversation with and flirted to his *brain's* content, for the heart had nothing to do in the affair, with many who

* Swift was his chaplain in Ireland.

were not remarkable for their beauty, though they were all more or less pretty.

Some gallants will admire any women, however plain, however little gifted with personal attractions, if they flatter their vanity by seeming to prefer them to others, but Sandron was not one of these. Conscious of his own powers, he needed no false excitement of this sort, neither unsought admiration nor fashion could attach or chain him for a moment. Gifted with ready wit, quick, observant, and of brilliant talents, Sandron saw and knew as much of the world in a few weeks as most men would do in as many years.

Early in summer the queen closed the session of Parliament and retired to Windsor, when, as Sandron's presence was not required there for some days, he resolved during that time to look closely after Master Surface, and to endeavour to obtain some news of Corah.

After the appearance of the gipsy beneath

the window of Louisa Marmaduke, we left Lady Monkton in close conversation with her niece, during which the events of the preceding afternoon as well as those of the immediate night were anxiously discussed. It was in vain that Lady Monkton combated Louisa's resolutions, and pretended to regard Corah as an unfortunate creature unworthy of the slightest credit; the determination of her niece was at this moment not to be shaken, and the latter resolved on never again admitting Master Surface to her presence. Louisa Marmaduke seemed to have been aroused from the passive state of despondency which affliction and the designs of those around her had induced, and to be once more inclined to think and act for herself; she even hinted at a visit to Lady Sandron at the Hall, when Lady Monkton felt herself constrained to satisfaction with a promise from her niece not to take any decisive steps for the present as to communication with the Hall, but to leave those pro-

ceedings for more mature reflection. In the mean while she also gave a reluctant promise that she herself would write to Master Surface, and decline his future visits : accordingly, on the following morning a letter was despatched to him as follows :—

"My very good and esteemed Friend,

"It is with much reluctance that I have put pen to paper on the like occasion herein about to be presented, but, as my niece is resolved *for the present* not to listen to your proposals, probably it will be more good for you to absent yourself till better times and seasons. Tales have been borne to her ears, (which I do not credit), but to which she seems inclined to attach much weight; the story of the gipsy woman and others have annoyed her, but I need not herein narrate all the subtlety that has been raised against you. Do not at present press your suit, consider me still your friend, as indeed all those should be friendly who have *the*

good cause at heart; Mistress Freeman is all-powerful, and there is a rumour, as I will venture to say you are aware, of an approaching dissolution of Parliament.

"Believe me faithfully your's,

S. MONKTON.

Surface was at a tavern when this letter fell into his hands, and his angry violence knew no bounds; perhaps, where a woman was in the matter, it was only on such an occasion that his deep duplicity did not preserve its calm and unruffled semblance. In this instance he came at once to the ill-judged and hasty resolution of riding down to Twickenham, and demanding a personal interview: mounting his horse, therefore, he very shortly presented himself at the door of the villa. Lady Monkton viewed his arrival from the window, and her hasty temper fired in its turn at what she deemed a rash and insolent disobedience of her commands. Ordering him, therefore, to be admitted, she determined

to make him aware of her indignation. The interview was short, sharp, and decisive; Surface was in no way daunted by her anger, or careful of his own expressions of wrath, at what he was pleased to term the tampering he had met with, and at last indulged in so bitter a strain of sarcasm as to compel Lady Monkton to call for his horse, and to courtesy him from the room. With a threat that she should repent the line of conduct she pursued, and with a scornful laugh of defiance, Surface galloped from the door.

Lady Monkton, as the sounds of the retreating feet of the horse died away in the distance, stood musing for some moments in a blaze of angry indignation. In all probability she knew more of the desperate character of the man she had just parted from than she chose publicly to admit, and this it was that might have induced her so readily to comply with a subsequent proposition made to her by her niece, as to their

removing from the vicinity of London, and making a tour through the western parts of England.

Louisa was informed of Master Surface's visit, and not a little pleased by the evident traces of anger which his interview with her aunt had left upon that old lady's features. Wearied in mind and body, depressed in spirit, she embraced the idea of a change of scene, as a caged bird might long for the freedom of its native wilderness; and the journey was speedily arranged. Without divulging the place of their destination, within twenty-four hours of the departure of Master Surface they proceeded in the direction of Weymouth.

CHAPTER XXI.

> And on sweet St. Agnes' night
> Please you with the promis'd sight,
> Some of husbands, some of lovers,
> Which an empty dream discovers.
>
> JONSON'S MASQUES.

AFTER making every inquiry for Corah, but without effect, Charles Sandron ascertained, so far as the motions of that gentleman could be understood, that Master Surface had quitted London, or, at least, was not to be met with in any of his usual haunts. Having no further business on his hands, he resolved therefore to pay a visit to the Grove Farm.

For this purpose he was riding on his way through Deptford, when, his horse having

thrown a shoe, while the loss was being repaired, he strolled forth into the town, but had not proceeded many yards when his attention was arrested by a large crowd assembled in front of one of the houses. With that gregarious inclination inherent in the breast of every man, but without any definable object, Sandron soon ascertained that the surrounding people were reviling some one, who seemed to be most obnoxious to them, in the bitterest and most violent terms. At the moment of his arrival there was an outcry and bustle among the bystanders, as if some hurtful animal was suddenly let loose among their feet from the house before them. All seemed to buffet or to avoid the offensive creature, and presently after a poor little red dog was expelled from the more dense part of the crowd, and by a brutal kick from one of those whom it passed, rolled over in the dust.

Meek-looking, patient, but terrified, as the

little animal was, it disdained to cry, or to seek safety in further flight, but on hearing Sandron's exclamation of pity it crept at once to his feet, and, throwing itself on its back, looked upon him with a forlorn expression, and held up its little paws in an attitude of deprecation. In an instant he recognized Corah's little dog, which had left the tent, as was supposed, in pursuit of his mistress when she had fled after listening to the conversation that passed between Master Surface and her husband. Sandron stooped to caress it, but the well-intending bystanders interfered to prevent him, exclaiming — "That it was not safe to touch it, as it was the property of a witch, and might, if handled, place him within the power of her charms or spells."

"He, he, ho!" chuckled an old man, very deaf and very obstinate, but who had caught the purport of the words of the last speaker; "Ho, ho! *charms* indeed! and so she has, so she has: not of the dark science though, but of black eyes

and raven hair. Egad, egad, I would that I were young!"

"Go to, you foolish old cretur," exclaimed a woman who perhaps was his better-half, pushing him on the back at the same time till he almost fell on his nose; "go to, and be ashamed on yourself do—to talk in that way! You'd better have married a gipsy, no doubt."

A suspicion now flashed upon Sandron's mind, when, forcing his way through the crowd, the following scene presented itself.

On the foot-pavement, immediately in front of the ground-floor window, stood a man in a small circle allotted to him by the populace, his features were well remembered by Sandron as having been seen by him in attendance upon Master Surface. The eyes and teeth of the man were fast closed, as if labouring under some spasmodic affliction, besides which he every moment, or at intervals of quick succession, went through a variety of contortions as if in internal

pain. At the open window, forcibly thrust forward and detained in the rude grasp of several men, among whom, to his astonishment, he recognized Farmer Linden, her long black hair dishevelled, and her large eyes flashing indignant fire through her tears, appeared Corah. The hissings, hootings, and execrations of the bystanders were showered thick upon her, and Sandron at once became aware of the nature of the tumult. What was to be done? he was alone among an infuriated and blinded populace, and any violent attempt on his part would be vain, and perhaps create further injury to her whom he was desirous to befriend. To gain time for hasty deliberation he asked one of the nearest to him the nature of the circumstances.

"She is a witch, sir," replied the fellow; "and the poor cretur on the pavement before her is suffering under her cruel spells, he is full of pains, and almost at every moment crooked pins, with which his inside is pierced, fall from

his mouth, and lie upon the ground; besides which, he can neither eat or drink."*

Here the man supposed to be bewitched yelled as if in still greater agony, and the execrations from the crowd rose louder in proportion, mingled with cries — "Away with the witch to the river!—to the ducking-stool away!" One cowardly ruffian more forward and officious than the rest then sprung forward, and striking the suffering and defenceless girl on the lips, stained her beautiful teeth with blood. This was more than Sandron could endure; when, dashing through the throng, he in turn knocked down her brutal assailant, and turning his back to the window, faced the assembly.

The rage of the crowd for a moment seemed likely to be directed on him, but fortunately their ignorance, as often happens, took another channel, and their violence in Sandron's case, through the influence of an old woman, was turned to pity.

* See State Trials.

"Harm him not," the old woman cried; "touch not a hair of his head; don't you see a fresh manifestation of her powers? Curse her! she has conveyed her spells to him through the little dog he fondled but now, and bound him to be her defender; oh! I could tear the gipsy's eyes out!" and as if in her own degraded, hideous state, she cast a jaundiced and an envious glance on all that was young and beautiful, the old hag menacingly shook her hands in impotent rage.

While this was passing, Corah and Linden too had each recognized Sandron, the former shrieked to him for help, the latter, hastening from the room, joined him in the street just as he addressed the populace as follows.

"Are you men, are you Englishmen, are you British sailors (there were several of the latter present), that you thus treat a fellow-creature, and a woman, young, weak, and unprotected as you see she is? If you have aught serious to

charge her with, do so before a proper authority, but do not disgrace yourselves by unmanly oppression. I pledge myself that if you prove to my satisfaction that you accuse the girl rightfully, I will be the first to assist you in bringing her to justice; a fair trial and no favour is all I demand—you are not Englishmen, you are no true sailors, if you refuse it."

"Shiver my timbers!" exclaimed an honest-looking tar, with a tail of huge dimensions hanging down his back, "but the gentleman is right; bear a hand, my hearties, for an open sea, and no favour; we'll have all fair and above board—hurra!"

This appeal was responded to by the rest of the crowd. Like most authors of prompt and violent measures, Sandron became a leader, where hesitation or more cautious policy would have rendered him a slave, and hetook instantaneous advantage of his situation. Linden, too, who had been one of her principal accusers for having

bewitched his daughter and his cattle, was, from the respect he had every reason to feel for him, awed by Sandron's presence, and by the deference he evinced for his wishes, still further induced that many-headed monster, an English mob, to concentrate and obey.

While these events were passing, the man who was believed to be suffering from the spells of the gipsy had wandered into the house, where it appeared he lodged, and had laid himself down on his bed. Sandron, also, accompanied by Linden and one or two doctors who had been called in, entered the house and the room where Corah was detained a prisoner.

When Sandron approached her, the poor girl, had she been permitted, would have thrown herself at his feet. Tears, silent, and arising from a different source than those she had so lately shed, trickled down her cheek, but she soon recovered herself, and when loosed at Sandron's desire, she drew up her graceful figure to its full

height, and resumed her usual calm, and whenever Sandron had been present, respectful expression.

"What is all this, Corah? whence arise these charges and this disturbance?" asked Sandron, in a tone that all might hear what he said.

"They accuse me most unjustly of witchcraft," replied Corah; "that I bewitched his (pointing to Linden) daughter, and gave her papers to make her love a villain; that I cast an evil eye on his flocks; and now that I have changed the scene of my sorceries to the person of that miserable wretch, Hathaway,* who, in his accusation of me, and in his present pretence of suffering, is only acting by the orders of that incarnate fiend Master Surface, and endeavouring to intimidate me into obedience to the wishes of his master."

"And you declare that you are innocent?" said Sandron.

* See the Trial of Richard Hathaway, State Trials, vol. iv.

"*Innocent!*" exclaimed Corah, with a glance of concentrated scorn; but then remembering that the question might be one addressed more to the bigotry of those around than to herself, she replied, "I am innocent of witchcraft; the papers, as he calls it (pointing again to Linden), which I gave his daughter were communications borne by me to her from Master Surface — inventions of the devil——"

"Hear her! hear her!" exclaimed those around; "she confesses, out with her to the river!"

"Ay, out with her! her long hair and sparkling eyes shall not save her," cried the same old hag whom we have noticed before, forcing her way at the same time into the room, and dragging with her a simple-looking girl. "Here, here is fresh evidence of her guilt; come, dear (addressing the girl whose arm she held), shew the spells—the papers she has given you."

"Stay!" interposed Surface; "let me ask the

girl some questions. Come, wench, tell me what has the prisoner (pointing to Corah) ever done to you?"

"She tell'd me to knit the left garter round the right stocking, and say—

"'This knot I knit,
To know the thing I know not yet;
That I may see
The man that shall my husband be;
How he goes, and what he wears,
And what he does all the days.'"

"And what did you expect that charm would bring you?" asked Sandron.

"A husband, sir," replied the girl, swinging her elbows, and gathering up the hem of her apron.

"Did the prisoner teach you anything else?"

"Yes, sir, she tell'd me to watch the first appearance of the new moon after new-year's day, and while looking at it to lean over the bars of a gate or stile, and say—

"'All hail to thee, Moon, all hail to thee!
I pray thee, good Moon, reveal to me
This night who my husband must be.'

And then I was to go to bed, and in my sleep I should see my sweetheart."

"There's heresy for you, my mates!" exclaimed the old hag, with a triumphant and self-satisfied leer upon those who surrounded her; "what better proof of her guilt is wanting?"

"Stay, stay yet one moment," said Sandron; "on my word, I see nothing so very wicked in these methods, which are used by all gipsies or fortune-tellers as a means of earning money from the simple and over-credulous. None of you seem to have obtained husbands by either your own charms, or those of your instructress, so neither good nor harm has happened from it."

"Yes, there has though," said a little meagre-looking man, with light lank hair, whose forehead and hands seemed constantly damp from nervous excitement; "there has been harm come of it, though. I—I should never have married

Mistress O. if the gipsy had not given her charms to make her see me in her sleep."

" Dam unpleasant dream da buckra lady hab on it, den !" exclaimed a black sailor; " Gor Amighty ! me wonder her next sleep hab not been in da Werkenrust."*

" Ha, ha, ha," shouted several sailors, and others; " put that in your pipe, ould chap, and smoke it; that's as good as a drop of Gemaker, hurra !"

Sandron saw and took advantage of the humour of his auditors, and proposed that himself, Farmer Linden, the medical men, and a few others, should repair to the room where Hathaway was stretched upon the bed in well-affected torments, and try what could be elicited from him.

Having ascended thither, they found him in much the same situation as when standing in the street, and no inducement they could offer would

* Name given to the burying-ground at Demerara.

prevail on him either to speak or open his eyes. The woman who attended him declared that he had fasted for days, and that she had often swept away handfuls of needles, nails, and crooked pins, which had fallen from his mouth both night and day; others of the same sort were then lying on the floor, and in the bed where the impostor himself lay stretched, and of these Sandron himself took notice.*

"You, Richard Hathaway," said Sandron, "are you dumb? cannot you reply to my questions? (The man shook his head.) How shall I know then what remedies to offer you?"

The person thus addressed pointed to a corner of the room, and on the woman who attended to him being asked for an explanation of the gesture, she replied "that he intended them to receive the necessary information from her."

"Tell us, then," continued Sandron, "how

* See State Trials.

we are to relieve or in any way benefit this man ?"

" Please you, sirs," replied the woman, " I have heard Mr. Hathaway say, between the intervals of the fits which seize him, that the only way of giving him sight and speech is to bring under his hand the person of the witch through whom he suffers, and to let him scratch her till the blood runs,* when her power over him for a time will cease."

" By my faith !" exclaimed Sandron, " an excellent test ; I had begun to deem the man a cheat ; but, fast as his eyes are closed, and speechless as he is, if his really scratching the woman till the blood runs will cure him, it shall be tried. Corah, come hither."

Corah, who had been brought into the room still guarded and surrounded by some of those who believed in her guilt, cast an imploring glance on Sandron, and seemed to shudder or

* See State Trial before-mentioned.

recoil from the very idea of being placed under the hand of the man who lay before her, but, after hesitating a moment, in which she narrowly scanned the expression on Sandron's brow, she advanced, and stood beside him. The other young woman, who had been dragged forward as farther evidence by the old hag before mentioned, and who had spoken reluctantly enough, was also by the bedside, and on her Sandron impressively laid his hand, making a sign to her also to obey.

"Now," he cried, "Richard Hathaway, since no other remedy will do, I am about to place under your hand the person of Corah, the gipsy, whom you accuse of bewitching you; you may scratch her arm till the blood appears. Corah, are you willing that he should do so?"

The low sweet voice of Corah was heard to say, "I am."

The other girl, under the pressure of Sandron's strong arm, then leant forward to the bed,

the eyes of the man who was to scratch her being fast closed, and his countenance turned another way, and tremblingly *she* submitted to the operation.

Sandron could scarcely restrain his indignation when he saw how bitterly the wretch made use of his nails on what he conceived to be the flesh of his desired victim; the first indentation of his fingers drew blood, when the girl with a shriek sprang back from the bed, and left him.

She had scarcely regained the side of Corah, when Hathaway, to the disappointment of many and the indignation of some, opened his eyes, sat up in bed, and asked for food. Sandron gave no time for hesitation.

"Scoundrel," he exclaimed, "impostor, why the blood thou hast drawn never ran in the veins of Corah! Here, here, my friends," he continued from the window to the people in the street, "here is the proper object for your indignation."

Before he had well concluded the sentence, many of the crowd had burst into the house, and forced their way into the room; the annunciation of Corah's innocence ran like wildfire from ear to ear; no questions were asked, for so long as a victim was given up to the thirst of vengeance in the mob, it mattered little who that victim might be. They seized on the trembling wretch, now pale and terror-stricken at the sudden turn which fortune had made against him, and, determined to punish him on the spot, hurried him off to the river.

The shouts and cheers of the populace died away as they hastened down the street in the direction of the ducking-stool, when Corah and Sandron were left in the room together. That fortitude which had never once forsaken her during the time she was surrounded by a hundred rude enemies now gave way in the presence of a single friend, and the poor girl would have fallen to the ground, but Sandron prevented her,

and, seating himself on the foot of the bed, placed her by his side.

"Calm yourself, Corah," he said; "hasten from this place; the violent men by whom you were so lately surrounded may shortly return, and you may yet meet with further insults; go, hasten into Kent, be somewhere in the neighbourhood of Grove Farm; I am going there now, and would have conversation with you. You will want money — take this, speed there by what means you can. No thanks, Corah — dear Corah, adieu!"

As Sandron thus conjured her, Corah, rising from her seat, seemed at once to be repossessed of all her fortitude; and, as the shouts of the populace returning from their Lynch-like vengeance on Richard Hathaway were once more distinctly heard, she glided from the room, and Sandron also prepared to resume his journey.

CHAPTER XXII.

Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of ocean is deepest in die,
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine.

BYRON.

A race of rugged mariners are these;
Unpolished men, and boist'rous as their seas;
The native islanders alone their care,
And hateful he that breathes a foreign air.

POPE.

HAVING visited different places on the coast, among them the little village of Weymouth, which had not then attained the celebrity since bestowed upon it, Lady Monkton and Louisa Marmaduke at length hired a cottage at Fortune's Well, in the wildly picturesque island of Portland. It was one of the few houses in the island, with the exception of the castle built by

Henry VIII., capable in any way of containing a family even of their dimensions, but, as it commanded a beautiful seaward view, and looked directly over that extraordinary feature in the landscape, the Chissell, or Pebble Beach, the little inconveniences to which they were subject were regarded as matter of amusement than otherwise.

On their arrival at the cottage, Louisa had taken into her service Morna, a true fair-haired daughter of the island, with light blue eyes, clear complexion, and tall and graceful figure. There is seldom to be seen, at the present time, a finer race of peasantry than are the inhabitants of this rock, particularly the unmarried girls. There is little of that clumsy proportion usually to be met with in the lower classes, but their forms are replete with grace and buoyancy, and, in point of natural elegance, would not disgrace the highest circles, at least until matrimony and its attendant duties have interfered with their symmetrical perfection. The

men are only remarkable for their bravery in the assistance which they afford in cases of shipwreck, and their never-wearying exertion and attachment to the contraband trade.

On one of those delicious evenings when summer opens the sun-blessed warmth and sweetness of her bosom, when not a cloud stains the mild blue face of heaven, or a ripple the surface of the slumbering sea, when the voice of the mighty deep seems in subdued murmurs to lament its past and fearful passions, and almost to ask forgiveness of the rugged rocks, whose stern brows it had scathed and broken, Louisa, accompanied by her attendant, Morna, stood upon a beetling rock, overhanging the villages of Chissell and Fortune's Well. They looked down from the eminence on the little walled-in fields and gardens, which, with the adjoining houses, lay stretched like a map beneath them.

The Chissell Beach, which formed the bar between the Western Ocean and the Portland

Roads, seemed but a mere line of sand. South-west of the point where Louisa stood, but not perceptible, lay the island of Guernsey, right before her and seaward was the island of Scilly, and the tiny airs from the west-south-west, winning their way across the deep blue main, and stealing a perfume from the fresh seaweed, which even then felt the restlessness of the Portland Race, came softly to her cheek, and teemed with health and vigour.

The sun now sank in his ocean-bed, but the sky, as if loath to lose the light of her splendid lord, still blushed in the warmth of his last caress, casting, as it were, a lingering smile upon the illimitable couch that had wooed to repose the effulgent source of all visible perfection, and beautifying with roseate hues the crests of the tiny billows, till all beneath was crimson, green, and gold. So sweet, so soft, so sublime, so bold and beautiful was the prospect thus presented to view, that mere existence of itself was a pleasure,

when, with a heart sympathising with surrounding appearances, and replete with that mysterious sensibility which, through the smile of nature, wakes upon the soul, and fills it, in spite of human sophistry, with a due sense of the inimitable perfection of the universe, Louisa turned to her attendant and spoke as follows.

"Well may you, Morna, be proud of your rocky home, and feel an honest pleasure in pointing out the different objects worthy of attention. It is most beautiful, indeed; Morna, I do not wonder at your being fond of the place of your birth, and the scenes of your childhood; you have been safe here from the persecution, the desertion of the world, its intrigues and its follies; and, like the humble bark of the fisherman, you have escaped the wind which rent the lofty sails of the rich merchant vessel. Your's is a far happier lot than mine, and there is many a head lying couched on the downy pillow, that might well envy that sleep which hovers so softly over the lowly mattress of the peasant of the barren

rock. But, come, it is a sin to be shut out from the face of nature on such an eve as this; let us go by the village of Ison, and dwell upon the prospect which the coast beyond affords."

They then passed on, and in a short time stood on the summit of the rocks where now stands Pensylvania Castle; beneath them, in a hollow running down to the sea, lay the ruins of the little church, destroyed by rude hands at the time of the Reformation, and on the opposite rock towered the still frowning walls of the warlike castle of Rufus. It was a curious landscape then—it is so now. In the midst of a wild ravine or glen, which seemed rent out of the solid rock by some convulsion of nature, stood, and still stand, the ruins of a little church, though at that time there was a greater extent of ground between them and the edge of the cliff; the burial ground as green, apparently as sheltered, and unpresuming, as any to be met with in the most humble inland village. The white gravestones look up to the grey walls of the church

as if still seeking a blessing from the ruined altar, and the stinted trees and bushes, turning from the sea, and stretching out their warped and dwarfish limbs, appear to crave the protection and shelter of the crumbling edifice. The calm and holy appearance of the little church and burial ground was, and is now, in strong contrast with the surrounding scenery. Immediately above it are pointed and storm-worn rocks, and the shot-pierced ruins of the stronghold of war, while beneath the churchyard, and now at the foot of its very foundation, the wild wave still continues insidiously to undermine. Further seaward, but in visible and audible proximity, roars and foams the dangerous fury of the Portland Race. So near does the house of God now stand to the ocean, that, when lifted for a moment on the ruthless wave, the drowning mariner might still cross himself before the spot which once contained the sacred altar. Well might that church be likened to the haven of the souls,

whose earthly confines have sunk beneath the raging flood—a missionary from Heaven, a miniature of itself, watching over the turbulence of its own creations — vast, awful, and incomprehensible in their uses as many of those creations and ordinances are—and ready to receive into the mystery of its sanctuary the sinful remains of its doomed and failing children.*

They had watched for some time the different vessels passing on their courses, with every stitch of canvas set alow and aloft, till they remarked a lugger standing in for the island. She was now the only sail in sight, when, owing to her diminutive appearance, induced by the dis-

* In the great storm of 18—, when the sea beat over the Chissell beach, and joined the waves of the Western Ocean to those of the Portland Roads, a vessel was driven in shore, when the captain, losing all nerve, exclaimed "that the power which could save them was not in man," and consequently he was about to abandon the ship to the mercy of the elements. The mate, however, bearing in mind the maxim that *man should never abandon himself*, asked leave and obtained permission to take the command, ran the ship on shore, and saved every soul *except the captain*, who was below at prayers.

tance and the surrounding waste of waters, her very presence only seemed to add to the grandeur and loneliness of Nature. Darkness was now fast setting in, to assert the brief reign which the rising moon permitted, and as the lugger seemed approaching the creek immediately beneath the church, Louisa asked her attendant if it was one of those vessels employed in the disgraceful trade of smuggling, of which she had often heard so much.

"Nay, lady," replied Morna, "call it not disgraceful; I have many friends and relations (we are all cousins here*) employed in that line of life, not one of whom would be guilty of a dishonest or disgraceful act; we think it no sin to run the necessaries of life."

"Is it not sinful, Morna, to disobey the laws?"

"It is, lady," continued the attendant, "when the laws are natural and just; but they can never

* Alluding to the frequent intermarriage of the islanders, by which nearly the whole population have become more or less related.

be either the one or the other when they raise the price of food or liquor, manufactured from the growth of that which God has pronounced to be good. I hate the preventive men, and I care not how many more my cousins throw from the rocks into the sea."

"Fie, Morna, fie," said Louisa; "you must not speak thus in my presence. If the people are to be the judges of the laws under which they live, and to determine for themselves which it is proper to obey and which not, we shall have men guided by their ruling passions, and our country ruined by anarchy."

Silence was then maintained for some time; Louisa, absorbed in her own reflections, sat down on the soft sweet grass, as did her attendant also; gradually their minds wandered from the objects around them, and sleep, induced perhaps from the mild airs and murmurs of the ocean, with its downy pinions took possession of their senses.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Redressing injury, revenging wrong,
To aid the damsel and destroy the caitiff;
Opposing singly the united strong,
From foreign yoke to free the helpless native;
Alas! must noblest views, like an old song,
Be, for mere fancy's sport, a theme creative?
A jest, a riddle, fame through thin and thick sought!
And Socrates himself but Wisdom's Quixote?

BYRON.

ON the deck of the lugger, which has been an object of attention in the foregoing chapter, stood three persons, one of them her commander, a commissioned officer in the service of the queen, the other a Weymouth pilot, while the third was Master Surface.

"And you say," said the latter, addressing the pilot, "that, in the present state of the

weather and tides, we may land at Church Hope?"

The man replied in the affirmative, on which the lugger's head was brought to the wind, if the light airs might be so called, and having lowered her boat, Master Surface with several men who did not seem to belong to the crew proceeded in it directly to the shore.

It was now as dark as the rising moon, a clear sky, and the reflection of the waters, would permit it to be, and when Surface landed, he ordered the boat's crew to await his return, taking with him only his own immediate followers. He then proceeded up the rocky path which led to the village above; on their way they were met by a man, who, making a sign to Surface, led him a little apart from the rest.

"Well," said Surface, "what news?"

"Bramble my body!" replied the hoarse voice of the gipsy Smith, "but we are in luck; I have tracked the hare, light as her foot is, to

her form on the rock immediately above us, she is there with but a single female attendant."

Smith then led the way in a circuitous direction, necessary to gain the ascent of the left-hand promontory, when the conversation was continued.

"How gained you the intelligence, not only that which you forwarded to me, but this of the present moment?" said Surface.

"After I had dogged them to Weymouth," replied the gipsy, "and found out that they had crossed the water to Portland, I soon housed them in their residence at Fortune's Well."

"And how came you to meet me at this spot?" demanded his employer.

"Why, being on the look-out for you, I saw your vessel sail from Weymouth, which I could easily do from the island, and I thought you were coming round to the Chissell Beach, when, as I kept you in sight, who should cross me but the very game we were hunting; I

watched them till they were safe, and then, seeing where you landed, hastened to give you the meeting."

"You did well: have you heard any tidings of your *agreeable* wife?"

"No," replied Smith; "I believe she has flown to her old haunts in Kent, but, when this here job is done, I'll be down likewise upon her."

Thus speaking, and with a vast deal of other conversation, with which it is not necessary to trouble our readers, these worthies continued on their way. Louisa and her attendant were fast asleep. The former lay on the short green grass, with her cheek resting on her arm, her hair slightly waving on her neck, as if moved by some enamoured zephyr, and her lovely figure fallen into an attitude of graceful and unsuspecting rest. At her feet was stretched her attendant, when, together, they formed a tableau which the most fastidious limner might have envied.

There is much to pause over and admire in the soft abandonment of slumbering beauty. When awake, each motion, grace, and attitude, is ruled by the watchful mind, and tempered with a natural timidity; each loveliness is governed by a law which sleep does not acknowledge. It is not so when oblivion rules the hour; then may be seen that rest in which Eve lay when the serpent whispered in her ear, unsuspecting, guilelessly, innocently still. Man may approach, linger over, worship beauty in her sleep, but, if he *has* a soul, a rude thought cannot *then* enter into his composition.

Louisa had slumbered thus for a short time, when, on awaking, she was startled by the dark figure of a man, fixed and motionless, within a few yards of her; calling in terror on her attendant she sprang instantly to her feet; the dark figure approached, and Surface stood before her.

In his bearing there was now none of that assumed deference to Louisa usually worn by

him; abruptly, boldly, insolently, he advanced, and laying a strong grasp upon her arm, exclaimed: "Lady, you must away with me."

"Must!" exclaimed Louisa, mastering her fears as well as she was able, "what right or title, sir, have you to hold such language in aught that I am concerned? unhand me, Master Surface, that I may retire."

"Nay, nay, young lady, I am not to be trifled with now," replied Surface; "behold," he cried, making a sign with his arm, on which four or five men rushed forward, "we are strong enough to enforce compliance; will you obey me quietly, or must I carry you by force to yonder lugger?"

"Oh, God!" exclaimed Louisa, "save me, or I am undone!"

She then sprang towards the precipice, for no other retreat was left her, but Surface rudely caught her in his arms, and with the assistance of his men, secured her safely, and commenced his return to the boat.

While this was going on, Morna stood for a moment as if petrified in astonishment, but then, when she saw violent hands laid upon her mistress, and that she was about to be carried forcibly away, she darted down the rocky pathway with the speed of light.

"Stop her," shouted Surface to the gipsy; "seize her before she raises the village for assistance."

Away went Morna and her pursuer, the latter of whom, though well used to the shadow of night and wild and rugged roads, found that at present he held in chase one as active of foot as he was; in her hurry, however, Morna missed the turning to the village; she was aware that she had done so, but it was too late to retrieve her error, for the man was close upon her traces; nothing was left her then but to proceed. A single slab, placed for the quarrymen over a chasm, lay before her; she hesitated not, but tripping lightly over it, she struck the end

next her with her foot from the ledge of rock where it was resting, and as she heard it crash in the abyss beneath, set all further pursuit at defiance.

Having done so, she found that she herself was only standing on a ledge of rock, whence there was now no egress; however, any thing was better than falling into the hands of the ill-looking ruffian who stood within five yards of her, but as effectually prevented from touching her as if a mile had intervened between them. Having now nothing else to do, she availed herself of the privilege of woman, and screamed for assistance with all the power of voice she could muster.

Smith stamped with rage and vexation at the loss of his prize. The place was lonely, the hour growing late, the worst passions in his degraded nature were afloat, and there was no crime of which he was incapable.

"Silence that infernal din," he cried, tearing up at the same time from the rock at his foot a

huge fragment sufficient to have felled an ox; "silence that infernal din, or, bramble my body, but I'll do for you!"

He raised his arm, either with the purpose of terrifying the girl, or of putting his savage threat into execution, when at that moment a tremendous blow from a bludgeon laid him senseless on the ground.

"Cheer up, my hearty little angel," exclaimed the rough, clear voice of a sailor, who now stood over the bleeding body of the gipsy; "stick to your moorings and ride safe where you are till I rig out another bridge, for there are plenty of spare spars at hand."

So saying, he selected one from a number of planks lying upon the ground, and having poised it in the air, suffered one end to fall on the ledge of rock on which Morna was standing.

"There," he continued; "now then, my gal, up anchor and away—don't look below—bounce across — that's it — don't mind this land-crab

as lies here, step athwart him, or tread on him midships, which you like, for he deserves it, and then steer away after me, and you shall see more of the fun yet. Curse these shirkers, I'm blowed if I thought they'd run gals as well as tubs!"

So saying, the sailor led the way back to the commanding eminence whence Morna had been pursued by the gipsy. The moon had risen beautifully bright over the deep blue sea, and even a tub upon the glassy surface of the wide waters would have been visible from a great distance.

Close in shore, and making all use of the light wind which had now for the moment sprung up, were two vessels, one apparently in chase of the other. The sailor looked upon them highly delighted, and exclaimed to Morna—

"Now, my little dolphin-striker, you shall see the rest of the smugglers overhauled; that's our cutter, the starnmost of the two—there

they go—mainsail, topsail, foresail, gib-gaf topsail, and gib-topsail, all up—she's like a duck on the water, is as stiff as a crutch, and can carry her t'gallant sails in any wind. My eye, but she can work hank over hank, and, like you, my darling, she never misses stays. Look at the smuggler, too, with his three lugs, his gib, and his mainsail, all filling—there they go, damme, chock into the Portland Race, as those smuggling chaps will do, let the sea be what it may, whenever they are hard pressed; howsomever, that won't sarve their turn now, it's calm, d'ye see, and the race arn't nothing without a wind. Arn't it hextraordinary what power spirits has over living as well as dead things! we knows as it'll smooth rough seas and make a sailor spy mill-ponds when the waves is playing at leap-frog over the masthead, or send him chock into the ports of an innemie's vessel, to see what pepper she carries! But what I stands forrard to say as it *has sitch*

great power for, is jest as this, that I'm blessed if it don't make a boat—d'ye mind me—when she's full of tubs, a dizen times livelier in a sea nor she would be without 'em. Oh, my eye, the lubberly smugglers—who *ever* heared of a lugger beating a cutter *on* a wind ?—the thing's all up—it's unpossible—there ! the cutter boards her on the weather-bow, and I'm blessed if I arn't for the boat !''

So saying, down ran the sailor in the direction of the creek, where the boat of the supposed smuggler had landed Master Surface, leaving Morna still gazing from the rock.

Louisa Marmaduke had been borne on the shoulders of her captors to the boat, and thence on board the lugger; the men who accompanied Master Surface had obeyed his orders with the greatest alacrity, but when the boat reached the vessel matters were considerably changed. The captain, a plain bluff sailor, listened to the entreaties and representations made by the fair captive, and seemed to doubt

the propriety of the situation in which himself and a portion of his crew had been placed: he retired to his cabin, read his instructions, and returned to the deck more dissatisfied with the proceeding than before.

"Now, sir," exclaimed Surface, appearing not to notice the captain's hesitation and dilemma, "away double quick for Cherbourgh." Then, as the captain paused, in a marked manner he added: — "Do I not express myself plainly, sir — whence this delay?"

"Simply this," replied the other; "that d—m me if I like the act you have just committed!"

"I am not aware, sir, that you are to be the judge of the propriety of what I may feel myself called upon to do," rejoined Surface; "your instructions, I believe, are to put yourself under my orders, and to land me at Cherbourgh, are they not?"

"No, sir," said the captain, "they are *not* precisely as you state; I am to land you at

Cherbourgh, and *there* to await your further instructions; and I tell you plainly, that I think your present act one that I am not bound to countenance."

"Very well, sir! oh, very well!" cried Surface; "you have it in your power to do as you please, but you will do well to think twice upon the matter. I am in the service of the Government as well as you are, and if you choose to run counter to that which I may conceive to be their intentions, the fault is your's, and not mine; but see, by Heavens we are chased! I command, I entreat you, make all sail and away, for there may be those on board that cutter whom it might be ruinous to my enterprize to meet."

The captain thus addressed seemed scarcely to know how to act, for he was aware that Surface was entrusted with some secret service by the Government. Brave and simple-minded as a man could be, yet he was not gifted with much quick discrimination, and being, to use his

own expression, taken somewhat aback by the earnestness of Surface's manner, he gave an order for carrying all sail, and ran his vessel into the Portland Race, though it may be doubted from the way in which he manœuvred whether he had any real intention of escaping.

The sequel has already been described.

When the captain of the revenue cutter boarded the lugger, he was much surprised to find her under the command of a brother officer, and the conversation and explanation which took place between them closed in a joint request to Surface for an interview with the lady. This was at first refused, but when Surface found that opposition was likely to be of no avail, he turned doggedly round upon the captain of the lugger, and told him he might act in the matter precisely as might suit his own pleasure. An interview with Louisa immediately took place, which ended in her being placed in the cutter's boat and taken on shore with a guard, to see her

safely home, while Surface, at high words with his captain, sailed for the port of Cherbourgh.

When Lady Monkton heard from her niece the full account of the outrage upon her liberty attempted by Master Surface, she was greatly enraged. Not that she felt any vast share of indignation at the individual insult offered to Louisa, or much pity for the terror and violence she had undergone, but her anger was heavy on the score of the contempt which her own commands had met with at the hands of Master Surface, and because her prognostications and assurances as to the worth and virtue of the man, so often and so favourably made to her niece, were so palpably mistaken and incorrect.

The anxiety as to the fate of her party at the approaching elections, joined to her avowed determination of obtaining redress of Master Surface by legal means or otherwise, then induced Lady Monkton to acquiesce in the wish of Louisa as to a return to London; on their journey thither, therefore, we will for the present leave them.

CHAPTER XXIV.

It was, perchance, her spirit had been goaded
With suffering past its bearing, that her frail
But patient heart had been so deeply loaded
With sorrow, that its cords were forced to fail:
Sever'd by more than distance, I was told
Her heart amid its sorrows had grown cold.

ANON.

CHARLES SANDRON, after releasing Corah from her rude assailants, and convincing Farmer Linden that his belief in her dealings in witchcraft was erroneous, accompanied that worthy yeoman to his house at the Grove Farm. It was late when they arrived there, but they found the family party still assembled, with the further addition of Master Comfortem, who had at last brought his timid courtship to a conclusion, and

was received by Susan as her future husband. His promised bride indeed looked prettier than ever, for the hasty curl on her red lip, and the light archness of her laughing eyes, had been softened down and chastened by a shade of melancholy. The serious turn which her thoughts had taken from her misfortunes, and the nature of the discourse held by, as well as from the instruction she was in the habit of receiving from her affianced husband, had greatly tended to bring about a most beneficial result.

The tearful dejection which had for a while oppressed was now changed into a meek and unmurmuring state of serenity and severity of atonement; she was like a still and beautiful evening, which we see so often follow a dark and stormy day. The headlong and reckless spirit of her early youth had left her; having launched forth on the wild winds of curbless passion, and abandoned herself to its dangerous speed, she, like a million others, too soon discovered how

little capable its self-exhausting pinions were to bear even her young spirit in joy and content for long together.

Placed by nature and education in a dangerous position, she had fallen and been heavily afflicted, but arose again at last, to learn that there is not only consolation and forgiveness, but also a calm and contenting bliss to be found in the pure pursuit and spirit of religion. If the sensations gathered from virtuous research are not so dazzling and delightful to the animal nature as others of a more temporal description, still they are replete with so pure a light as to illume the blessings given innocently and usefully to be enjoyed, to render duty a pleasure, and life to be loved, though dedicated to prayer.

Sandron having slept at the farm, walked forth the following morning with the sisters. It was the close of summer, and the yellow harvest lay like a passive child on the breast of its all-bountiful mother. Each field was a scene of

gaiety and occupation. Here the mowers with their progressive step, and full and measured sweep of the scythe, cut down the latest barley, while there, the wheat-cart plied the dusty lanes, and hung golden tributes on all the boughs which brushed its teeming sides as it wound a careful way to the barn or rick-yard. They were contemplating the busy scene and the groups of sunburned children that were gleaning in the stubbles, when their attention was drawn to a female figure which emerged from a neighbouring thicket. Corah — for it was she — recognized them, but remained motionless, while Susan Linden, growing pale and exclaiming: "This way, Master Sandron, for the sake of Heaven!" endeavoured to retire towards the farm.

"Fear nothing!" replied Sandron; "I owe more to yonder gipsy than you are aware of. It was I who bade her seek me in this neighbourhood, for she deserves my care and your compassion."

So saying, and drawing the hands of the sisters beneath his arm, Sandron advanced to Corah, till the party joined her beneath the trees to which she had again retired.

The beautiful gipsy looked pale, as far as the deep olive of her complexion would permit her to do; and her lips were still slightly swollen from the blows she had received from her brutal tormentors at Deptford; nevertheless her carriage was as erect and graceful as ever, and her dark, flashing eyes possessed their wonted brilliancy.

"Corah," exclaimed Sandron, "you have seen at least one of these young ladies before, and you have much to regret for having once been the means of communication between one of them and Master Surface."

"I have, I have," cried the gipsy, springing forward, and kneeling at the feet of Susan, while she took and kissed her hand. "I have to ask your forgiveness, my dear young lady; I

was blind when I gave my services to that monster, but my eyes are opened now. My husband," she added in a tone of intense bitterness, rising and stamping on the ground as if she trod the wretch beneath her foot, "had bound the veil of night around my brow; but, blessed be the stars, the bandage is removed, and the horrors of the path he would have continued me in have become visible. Tentless, homeless, I stand before you, a fugitive from the contamination of one who would have sold his helpmate to perdition. Ay, I was as true to him as the tide to the moon, gipsy as I am, and dishonest as it is the fashion of the world to call me."

Corah burst into tears, and Susan Linden, taking her hand and placing her by her side on a bank beneath the trees, endeavoured to console her: after a moment Corah continued.

"Oh, I could have borne with any ill-usage but the last which he wished to crush me with: I have disregarded blows; I have shivered be-

neath the piercing blast of winter, when his drunken and savage wrath has driven me from my tent, and when gold has endeavoured to bribe me from myself, and insidious craft has taunted me with the insults I received, it has been my solace to look the infirmities of my husband full and openly in the face, and yet remain unshaken in my honesty to the marriage-vow. And what has been my reward? why that he would have sold me like a beast in the field! Oh, sir," she said, addressing Sandron, "those only who are miserable know the real sweets of happiness. You—you are casting from you the peace of this world, and are the dupe of a designing villain."

"I the *dupe* of a villain!" cried Sandron in high disdain, "who, forsooth, *is* this villain that has duped me?"

"The same," replied Corah, "of whom we spoke but now — Master Surface."

"Corah, you let your bitterness outrun your

discretion, I *know* Surface to be a villain; but how has he made *me* his dupe?"

"Thus," rejoined Corah. "Nay, sir, be not angry. He has deceived another through you, has deceived you also, and made you each subservient to his views upon the other. Where is the young lady with whom you were bred up? what has become of the vow you mutually plighted? have you not quarrelled with your first, ay, and let me tell you, with your *only* love, and are you not the dupe of the villain who designed that you should do so?"

"Speak out, Corah," said Sandron; "if you know aught touching this matter, deal not in the vague inuendoes of your tribe, but state simply the facts as you may know them."

"Hear me, then, for I will utter nothing but the truth. It was Surface who first poisoned the ear of your betrothed with tales of your London life. He it was who told her of your speech at supper, when you showed the locket containing

her hair. He brought her the ribbon that had held it, and, when her letter was wrested from your bosom on Maidenhead Thicket by some of my tribe, he, by bribing one of the lads, possessed himself of it, and placing it in her hands, asserted that you had cast it contemptuously away. By a thousand arts he set her mind against you; and you, from being ignorant of the reason of the apparent change in her feelings, assisted him materially by the careless coldness of your manner. You had another enemy in the camp, in the shape of Lady Monkton; her family had long been at variance with your's, besides which, her bigotry to the Protestant religion and to the high church party alone would have caused her to detest you. She encouraged Master Surface's designs, and gave him all facility in his suit; he has declared his love for your young lady, and has proposed for the honour of her hand."

"What!" exclaimed Sandron, all the latent

jealousy of his disposition aroused; "did he dare to approach her with an offer of *his* alliance?"

"He did," replied Corah; "and more, when he well knew that he had yet a wife in existence, that he was, in truth, an exile from his native land, and branded with the stigma of outlawry. His real name will never be revealed by me, but there are thousands who know him if they chose to do so."

"Tell me, Corah," said Sandron, "where is this Master Surface now; and where is Lady Monkton and her niece?"

"The former is about to proceed to France on some dark mission to those in power there; oh! I have watched him with a vigilance not to be surpassed; and the others are gone I know not exactly where, but do you seek them out, cast yourself at the feet of your young and beautiful mistress, acknowledge your fault, disabuse her mind, and seek her forgiveness. She will

grant it, for she loves you now; and, when you have achieved all this, and once more linked your hopes and fears with her's, then you will feel as I felt when I first warned her of the machinations of Master Surface. Ay, take her to your bosom, for if ever there was a being on earth likely to bring sunshine and contentment around the hearth of her husband, that being is Louisa Marmaduke. Seek her, take her and gladden the halls of your fathers with her presence."

Corah raised her eyes and started, for, standing near, the picture of astonishment at the society in which he found his betrothed, was Master Comfortem.

"Oh, Susan, Susan," began Master Comfortem:—"Difficile est longum subito deponere amorem. It is hard to chide you, but, indeed, indeed, the conversation of a loose gipsy cannot be edifying to the affianced wife of a Christian minister. Good woman, 'vous y perdrez vos pas,'

as the Frenchman says, your steps are lost, and your labour likewise; if you have come hither with the prospect of getting money, I pray thee arise and be gone."

This address was lost upon Corah, who seemed to regard Master Comfortem with ineffable contempt. Sandron stepped forward to explain, and soon set at rest the hostility of the good curate, and even interested his kind consideration for the extraordinary girl before him.

"But," said Master Comfortem to Sandron, "in her previous conversation she charged you, my excellent friend, with misconduct to some young damsel; oh let me not think that you, to whom we are so much indebted, can ever have been guilty of an impropriety, at least not of a grave one; tell me, good Zingaro, or gipsy, thou spokest this moment of a damsel whom my young friend had injured; what! hath he scared her lambs, frighted her fowls, or spoiled her housewifery? I am sure there could be nothing more grievous to lay to his charge."

"He has done none of these things," said Susan Linden, smiling at the innocence of her intended husband's address, but at the same time taking him fondly by the hand, "there has been a mistake, which has led two people, who I trust still love each other, into error. This poor gipsy girl is well worthy our compassion; she has left her tribe, and has now no certain place of shelter. I am going to ask you a favour, you will grant it me, will you not?"

"Al molino ed alla sposa — sempre manca qualche cosa, as the Italian would say, name it, dear, and if it is right, as I am sure it must be, or you would not ask it, I will be delighted to attend to your wishes."

"Well, then," continued Susan, "let us take Corah into our service, or at least give her a home to rest in?"

This request rather startled Master Comfortem, when Corah, perceiving it, and drawing herself proudly up, exclaimed—

"Lady! dear young lady! I thank you from my heart for your well-intentioned kindness; but you can — no one can give me a fixed or settled home; I have been too long used to a wandering life ever to rest my head for a continuance twice on the same spot. If I need shelter, I have only to seek it in Sandron Hall, there is warmth and refreshment beneath its old oaken roof far greater than ever I shall require, and as to a *home*, why the world will give me that at least while I have health and strength. Nature has been a mother to me; her beauteous face in calm and storm has ever brought me comfort; for in the soft, sweet air, in the moan of the wind, in the clear sun and moon, and in the voice of storm and thunder, there is no deceit, and the pleasure I derive in studying the open book of God through the stars in *his* hemisphere is all the enjoyment that is left me. Nay, lady, many thanks; I will not refuse the gipsy's boon."

Susan put some money into her hand, and Corah, with much deep feeling in her manner, walked up to Sandron, and in a voice tremulous with emotion, thus addressed him, while, at the same time, she led him apart from his companions.

"I am about to leave you, but ere I do so, Charles Sandron, listen to my words. You have now launched forth into the wide world; you have lived in its gayest scenes, and drunk deeply, for one so young, of the intoxicating draught, which the tempting demon ever holds to the lip of the rich, the clever, and the comely. There are many girls—many women—married though they may be, bright in nature's beauty, and endowed with all that state and station can bestow, who love you; some of them with an affection uncontaminated and pure as the love of Heaven; others for the graces of your form and your worldly possessions; while some there are that like you simply for notoriety, public

display, and personal gratification; each and all of them have hope as their ally and companion, and all have an individual chance, whether their views be correct or incorrect, that their wishes may succeed. The feeling which besets the breast of each, no matter whence it arises, is strong and powerful as the tide of the mighty ocean, and I, the gipsy, who stand before you thus, I *love* you, Charles Sandron, deeply, devotedly; I know not why, yet still I *do* love you; you never courted me—you never poured soft words into *my* ear, and yet I love you—nay, loved you long before we had exchanged a word, for often have I watched you when you were thinking of naught but the sports of the field. Those that I have alluded to before have hope to cheer them on, *I have none;* it has long fled from me, if I ever possessed it. Without hope, without reward, with the knowledge that I shall see you wedded to another, will I continue to watch over and work for your happiness, and I

ask for no further gratification than the assurance of having served you. Go, Charles Sandron, seek for Louisa Marmaduke, ascertain in what quarter of the world she may be, and hasten to an explanation *ere it is yet too late.* She is beset by danger and violence, and tracked by a skilful and determined hunter, whom neither disgrace nor danger can turn from his deadly purpose. You love her ; pride, folly, and the villany of others have blighted the bloom of your affection, but they have not touched its root, and she is attached to you still. If you neglect my advice, if you lose her, then lay the bitter worm of remorse at your heart for ever, for you will never cease to curse the hour you were born—farewell."

As Corah uttered the last word, and before Sandron could stretch forth his hand to detain her, she sprang back into the thicket, and in a moment was lost among the intervening trees.

Sandron, deeply impressed with what had

fallen from the lips of the gipsy, rejoined his companions, and prepared to return to London, for the hour of his duty at court was fast approaching.

CHAPTER XXV.

But thou and thine shall know no blight,
Whatever fate on me may fall;
For Heaven in sunshine will requite
The kind—and thee the most of all.

Then let the ties of baffled love
Be broken—thine will never break;
Thy heart can feel—but will not move;
Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.

BYRON.

As Sandron returned to London on the following morning, he pondered deeply on the information and assertions of Corah. It seemed as if the address of the gipsy had broken through the mist which had so long darkened his better resolution, and once more, or for the time at least, recalled him to a sense of the real state of

his affections. Could he have met with Louisa Marmaduke at that moment, he would have thrown himself at her feet, and the mystery would have been cleared up at once; but, alas! fortune seldom favours the right side, and again doubt, hesitation, and mistaken pride, held their unhappy sway.

How often are those that love each other thus divided by a single word, which absolutely struggles on the lip of each, but still some secret devilry has the power to restrain it, and by the withholding of it to endanger the happiness of their lives! Sandron knew that Corah spoke the truth; he knew, when he chose to know it, the situation of his heart; and yet he returned to London with only one angry resolution, and that was to confront Master Surface on the first opportunity, charge him with his duplicity and villany, and force him to repair or add with his sword to the injuries he had inflicted.

For some days he was diligent in his inquiries

after his enemy; but all the information gained tended only to confirm Corah's statement as to the departure of Master Surface for the coast of France.

Finding himself therefore baffled for the present in his more violent intentions, he wrote to his mother a long, rambling letter, the upshot of which was contained in a postscript written in apparent carelessness, simply asking after the white doe, and if she had heard any news of Lady Monkton or Louisa Marmaduke. Orders then came for him to repair to Windsor, where the court was at that time sojourning.

On arriving at Windsor he found Lady Marlborough, the main stay of the liberal party, deep in the intrigues and bustle of a general election,* writing despatches, and aiding with head, heart, and hand, the interests, far and near, of her favourite candidates. To Sandron she often appealed for assistance, and obtained leave of

* Parliament had been dissolved 2nd of July

absence for him from the court so that he might render his father service in heading and leading up his tenantry on the day of nomination.

During the hurried visits which he thus paid to Sandron Hall, he gained no intelligence of Louisa Marmaduke, for it seemed that Lady Monkton had succeeded, for a time at least, in breaking off all her niece's correspondence with her former friends.

Matters were in this state, when one day, the queen, accompanied by a portion of her suite, paid a visit to Lady Marlborough at the cottage in Windsor Forest, which had of late been given to that lady as a residence. In resuming his duties at court, Sandron had again been thrown much into the society of Lady Margaret Bonville, to the delights and fascinations of which he had once more surrendered himself forgetful of the warning from the gipsy.

As Bulwer so truly remarks, that "Beauty in men has little to do in engaging the love of

women. The air, the manner, the tone, the conversation, the something that interests, and the something to be proud of—these are the attributes of the men made to be loved." The same reasoning will apply to man's affection for the softer sex. Sandron might have escaped from the fascination of a thousand beauties had he been assailed simply by the regularity of form and feature; but when, in addition to these perfections, he saw that those lovely eyes, so courted and sought after by all the most brilliant men of the day, would only turn interestedly to him; when he observed the cold indifference with which she received the homage of others, and the attention and thankfulness which trembled round her lip when he addressed her, he found his position far too gratifying to be easily broken through. To be loved by such a creature, so gifted in mind and person, was in itself a situation splendid in every point of view; but to maintain his place in her affections in spite of

the insinuations, covert assertions, and envious detraction of a host of disappointed suitors, backed in their jealous malevolence by the party spirit and local influence of the powerful families to which they were related, was a triumph that his nature could not forego.

Without reflecting on the consequences, without taxing his heart with the question "if he loved Lady Margaret *better* than any other person living," he was content to seize and use the budding moments as their sweets were opened to his view, culling, grasping them, without observing that at every turn a thorn usurped the place that once had held a flower.

In this frame of mind, in this dangerous mood, Sandron found himself seated on the lawn in front of the cottage, in company with Lady Marlborough and Lady Margaret Bonville. The day was calm and sultry, and the scenery beautiful. The huge oak under which they were seated cast a pleasant shade on the soft velvet-like her-

bage of the lawn; from the boughs above the wood-pigeon breathed her mellow note, while in the distant glades of the forest the deer wandered to and fro, or tossed their ears and antlers impatiently at the flies, which, late in the season as it was, congregated in their vicinity.

A message came from the queen, who was reposing on a sofa in the cottage, requesting the presence of her dear Mrs. Freeman, in obedience to which Lady Marlborough arose, and Sandron and Lady Margaret were left together. Sandron had never yet *spoken* of his admiration, but, as we have elsewhere remarked, all the speeches that were ever framed will never induce love if it has not made some previous advances, nor will the most rigid silence disguise or keep secret the passion if it exists. Lady Margaret had been singing to her guitar, and had just concluded a beautiful ballad, when Lady Marlborough left them.

"Oh, sing that once more, dear Lady Mar-

garet," said Sandron; "there is something so touching in the air, that I could listen to it for ever. I beseech you sing it to me once more; I love to be the only soul to listen to such melody."

"You will be tired with hearing it so often."

"Tired!" replied Sandron; "I never tire of any thing that you do. I beseech you, Lady Margaret, repeat it; sing that melody again."

She then recommenced the air, the words of which ran thus:—

I do not weep that thou art gone,
I do not ever *wish* thy stay,
Thy path is neither sad nor lone,
To thee each hour is bright and gay.

For thou wilt seek the festive board,
Where flow the feast and sparkling bowl,
The halls where syrens' tones are heard,
Where willing beauty charms the soul.

There thou mayst boasting tell the tale,
That there is one who lives afar,
Who, until life and memory fail,
Will never cease to hold thee dear.

Yes, tell the tale, but tell it true,
Say that my love was pure, sincere,
Say that this bosom never knew
A thought that angels might not share.

Is it a crime the hours to chide,
Because they speed when *thou* art near?
To love to linger by thy side,
The accents of thy voice to hear?

If this be sin, how could I dare
To kneel before my Maker's throne,
To blend *thy* name in daily prayer,
Yet not a pang of shame to own?

No, dearest, tell not *thou* this tale—
Turn not the world's cold laugh on me?
I could not live its scorn to feel,
And know *that scorn* was caused *by thee.*

At the conclusion Lady Margaret rather abruptly put down her guitar, saying:—"I will sing that song no more, Master Sandron, at least, perhaps, only to you, for I believe you really like it, and the melody is much too pretty to be common to all the world."

"Indeed," rejoined Sandron, "I admire the

simplicity of the words, and the air I absolutely worship ; you are right, dear Lady Margaret, not to make it common, it were a thousand pities to hear it from other lips than your's."

"What!" she replied, "can you make that asseveration; you, the individually faithless knight, who is supposed to have sworn allegiance to beauty only in the general sense, and not particularly ; why you will lose your public renown if you make so thoughtless an assertion."

There was something so lovely, so graceful, and yet so arch in her manner when she said this, that Sandron forgot all the world, save the beautiful creature by his side, when, placing his hand so near her's as to touch it, by accident or design, it might have been either, he bent himself towards her and said :—

"Dear Lady Margaret"—her hand, though conscious of the approximation of his, did not retreat, so he clasped it :—"dear, dearest Margaret, do you not know, have you not seen that

I would renounce the multitude to share — to possess any thing in common with you: that my admiration exceeds all bounds; if my eyes have not assured you of the fact, let my lips at this moment declare it."

She was silent, but he looked into her blushing face, and there read, in the most lovely characters ever traced by the hand of Nature, the full hour of his triumph. Her long silken eyelashes rested on her cheek, as her glance was fixed upon the ground, while her lips, slightly apart, seemed the birthplace of all that was sweet, pure, and beautiful. He drew her to him, and imprinted a kiss on her brow. "Charles!" she exclaimed in a low harmonious tone, which, if it was meant to convey remonstrance or reproach, proved a sad truant to its errand.

'Tis strange, it is right I suppose, that it should be so, but there do sometimes happen in this life moments of maddening bliss, which one feels reluctantly bound to admit ought to

be speedily reft asunder. At the one of which we are treating, Lady Marlborough returned bearing some papers in her hand, and put an end to all further intercourse between the now to themselves declared lovers.

Lady Marlborough seated herself by the side of Sandron and pointing to the papers she held in her hand, thus addressed him.

"So, my good young friend, in spite of the Tory assurances to the contrary, Lord Grimstone has offered himself candidate for the Borough of St. Alban's, but I will teaze him, and you must lend me your assistance. Behold this play, it is a production well suited to his owlish wisdom: 'The Lawyer's fortune, or *Love in a hollow tree.*'* I must have a number of copies immediately printed and distributed among his constituents, with some illustrations such as I have described. Do you take these papers, and,

* See "Baker's Biographia Dramatica, or Companion to the Playhouse."

placing them in the hands of some waggish printer, forward them to St. Alban's without delay."

"Lo," she continued, showing the design to Sandron, as she placed the papers in his hands, "we will have his lordship pictured as an elephant, dancing on a rope by way of frontispiece, and now attend me to her majesty, for our dear Mrs. Morley is anxious to return to the castle." *

As she said this she led the way to the cottage, while the eyes of Sandron, as he folded up the papers without remark, encountered those of the Lady Margaret, who lingered for a moment till the haughty dame before them had advanced a few paces, she then said :—

"And do you intend to take that task upon yourself?"

"Never," was the reply ; their hands clasped for a moment, when, following Lady Marl-

* See Baker, as before.

borough, they stood in the presence of their queen.

As Sandron crossed the room, the papers so lately given to him fell from his vest, wherein he had placed them, when the queen, seeing the hand-writing, exclaimed :—" Ha, my dear Mrs. Freeman, is our young equerry the bearer of your despatches ; may I not see them, as these seem to be drawings of a quaint description ?"

" May it please your majesty," replied Lady Marlborough, who had not then induced the queen sufficiently to the Whig party to make it advisable to disclose all the tricks and intrigues consequent on a general election, as colouring she took the papers from Sandron and placed them in a richly-ornamented bag which she carried, " they are unworthy your majesty's notice."

The queen saw that her favourite was disconcerted, and made no further remark. Lady

Marlborough soon after drew Sandron on one side, and was about to return the papers to his care, when the latter addressed her as follows.

"Your ladyship will perhaps pardon my unwillingness to undertake this matter, when you are aware that Lord Grimstone is my friend, and that when he wrote that comedy he was but thirteen years old, so that any faults it possesses might well be excused. My dear Lady Marlborough, as a favour to me, let us put those papers in the fire."*

"Friend!" replied the imperious favourite, "friend! and is this a time to think of private relations, while public ones of imminent importance are at stake. Were this noble lord my nearest and dearest, I would not hesitate for an instant to cast him into ridicule; but, however,

* A new edition of the comedy was printed at the expense of the Duchess of Marlborough, and in a great measure bought up by Lord Grimstone, who, however, failed in procuring all the copies.—Baker's Biographia Dramatica.

you are unwilling to the task, therefore it shall be entrusted to other hands."

"Then may I hope that you are not angry with me for these scruples on the part of my friend?" said Sandron; "send me down to canvass, to speak in public against his political opinions, to confront, to oppose, to thwart his chance of success in any open way, and I will not hesitate to put my shoulder to the wheel, but I cannot undertake to promulgate any thing against him to which I am not openly professed."

"Well, well," replied Lady Marlborough, "in the name of Heaven there is no harm done! You speak, Master Sandron, of this trifling ridicule which I wish to put upon your *friend*, as if it was an injury of the deepest importance; or as if the Tories, though they live in a glass house, had not commenced a shower of stones; but see, her Majesty has summoned me, and we must away." So saying they joined the royal cortège and proceeded to the castle.

CHAPTER XXVI.

We parted, and we knew it was for ever —
We knew it, yet we parted; then each thought
And inmost feeling of our souls, which never
Had else been breathed in words, rushed forth and sought
Their sweet home in each other's heart, and there
They liv'd and grew 'mid darkness and despair.

ANON.

AFTER the circumstances recounted in the last chapter, when left to himself and to the unfettered flow of mental retrospection, Sandron felt like one who, by the force of accident and momentary position, had been betrayed into a further advance in matters than either his heart wished or his conscience approved. Though highly flattered by the preference so entirely bestowed on him by so delightful and fascinating a creature as the Lady Margaret, he would have

given worlds to have recalled the decided step he had taken, or to have replaced himself on a species of neutral ground, which, as it ever trembled on the verge of change, had in it a character of constant excitement at that time so much in unison with his disposition. From the course which events had taken, a mind nettled by supposed neglect, and a natural inclination to retaliate the injury, Sandron had commenced his admiration for Lady Margaret in an unhappy spirit of revenge, till by degrees he really became interested in the beautiful creature with whom he was so constantly associated. When once he had abandoned the helm, and trusted his vessel on the silent but wildly leaping current of love, he noted but little the speed with which his bark was hurried to the falls beyond, there to meet either a calm harbour, or a violent and fatal shipwreck.

Of all methods of retaliation, perhaps that of loving or pretending to love another is the most

dangerous and deceitful, although at the time it may appear not an unpleasant method of revenge. The temporary satisfaction arising from it is merely animal, it has nothing spiritual or lofty in its character; and, although circumstances connected with it may occasionally turn out happily, yet, in the multitude of instances it will be found that the game has been a miserable one for both parties. Sandron felt dissatisfied with himself, in his heart there was a tiny voice, which, small as it was, would make itself heard, and in his conscience he was disquieted. Man of the world as he had become, he was not altogether lost to the pure and high-minded appreciation of female virtue, so exalting in its influence on both sexes; over the one, by the power of inspiring such homage, and over the other, by the no less enviable distinction of being capable of its estimation; he could not therefore for a moment entertain the idea of trifling recklessly, or of using culpably the affections of such

a creature as Lady Margaret Bonville, while at the same time he knew that honestly her happiness could not be exclusively his care.

In spite of the warning of Corah, Sandron had brought himself to imagine that Louisa Marmaduke was lost to him for ever, and that it was due to himself that she should be forgotten. Still there were moments when visions of the bright, mild, and affectionate partner of his earliest hopes and fears came stealing over his recollections, soothed and chastened by those numberless and natural ties which are ever connected with innocence and home. Whatever might have been the extent of his resolution to overcome the impression which first love had made upon him, and when success in that object seemed most apparent, some slight recollection or naturally trivial circumstance would discover to him how little to be relied on were the resolutions of the brain when unsanctioned by the hope of the bosom.

If the artificial train of thought which he had assumed was left for an instant unguarded, gleams of former affection broke over the landscape of his mind, as the golden beam of the setting sun flashes again on the flowery face of nature to kiss, revive, and gladden the saddening tears with which the dark but evanescent thunder-clouds had oppressed but not destroyed the bloom of existence. In his mind he had determined that he no longer loved Louisa; but there were moments when in his soul he felt the fallacy of such a determination.

We will not follow Sandron through the progress of this unfortunate affair. With the culpable knowledge that to a great extent he was deceiving Lady Margaret, he nevertheless continued to hover around her. Although inwardly condemning himself, he had not resolution sufficient even to break through the circumstantial gratification by which he was surrounded and intoxicated. Courted by the women, and, as a

natural consequence, envied and even disliked by the men, in a brilliant but far from happy dream Sandron advanced in the maze of the surrounding difficulties. At times even his duty seemed to be in league against him; associated with Lady Margaret, there were occasions when the queen either rode or drove through the lonely and beautiful forest of Windsor, or lingered by the banks of its lakes, when Sandron wandered with Lady Margaret so far in the rear of the royal party as to be out of reach of interruption from others; and when he saw the lovely creature by his side with downcast looks and eyes brimfull of love; nature and education, example and animal spirit, held him in ambrosial chains, whose glittering links forbade him to turn from her or be silent. No wonder then that he spoke, if in passing, still under the dictates of momentary passion, or that his daring lip impressed on her's a seal she deemed reproachless in the eyes of Heaven. To wander in the soft summer air

amid such splendid scenery, to feel the cool freshness of the limpid waters, and to hear the songs of the birds pouring forth their notes of love, and revelling in the sweet flowers and luxuriant blossoms of the wilderness, and to share those sights and sounds with one of the most widely sought after and beautiful girls of the age in which he lived, was a situation so gratifying that Sandron could only appreciate and bow to its dominion.

It was in such scenes as these, and near the source of the Virginia Water, that on a lovely summer's evening, while reclining on the forest-turf at the feet of Lady Margaret, Sandron wrote and placed in her hands the following lines :—

Oh beauty! in the soft recesses of thy bower,
Where the wild woodbine twineth wreaths above;
Where thy best carpet is the fragrant flower,
Where the meek cushat sings her tuneful love,
There, in the depth of Nature's calm retreat,
Where gems no longer add their charms to thine—

Thus could I linger at thy fairy feet,
And hail the earth a Paradise divine.
In scenes like this, the truth is only found;
When naught distracts, or taints each purer fire,
When wild enthusiasm sighs around—
Then can the soul its mistress most admire.
No selfish pride in envy from the crowd,
No worthless wish—a rival to give pain,
No public vaunt to make man vainly proud;
No feeling framed to rouse a just disdain,
Should stain the wings which speed the Lover's day,
Or steal the sweetness of its wreath away.

These golden hours with their summer, however, like the brief sun of life, passed, and autumn asserted her ruder reign. Lady Marlborough had succeeded in defeating the election of Lord Grimstone, and in securing the return of a majority of her favourite Whigs. Among these she numbered the Lord Fitzhardinge for Windsor, and Mr. Colchester for the City of Gloucester, with some details as to the return of whom Sandron had been entrusted, though Lady Marlborough never entirely forgave him his previous disobedience. The court adjourned to

London, and on the twenty-third of October the new Parliament assembled.

During the passage of these events Lady Monkton and her niece had travelled through the country, paying a round of visits, the former lady consulting her relations as to the propriety of proceeding against Master Surface for the outrage he had committed in forcibly carrying Louisa Marmaduke on board his vessel. Inquiries had consequently been made as to the residence of this gentleman, but without avail, for he either had not returned from France, or had adopted such a strict incognito as to avoid all recognition. Even Jonathan Wild could or would not give any information respecting him, when for the present all efforts as to his discovery fell to the ground.

Louisa Marmaduke, thus freed from the hateful importunities attendant on Master Surface's proposals for her hand, gradually recovered her health and spirits; though the sigh

which frequently escaped her lips, and the melancholy which occasionally dwelt in her beautifully expressive eyes, proved to any keen observer that beneath the surface there were shadows of bygone scenes so indelibly engraved on her recollection as to be totally unassailable to the sunnier hours of the present day.

At the Grove Farm all was affluent industry and calm contentment. Susan, now lady of the manse, by her present unexceptionable conduct, seemed assiduous to atone for past errors, and Master Comfortem, after a brilliant effort on his flute, was heard to declare : — "that his horn, indeed, was filled to the brim with the bounties of Providence." Of Corah little had been heard, she had appeared once or twice at Sandron Hall, where the good old knight and his lady continued to dispense the grateful and graceful duties attendant on the well-arranged old English manor house — hospitality to their neighbours, plenty of employment to the able-bodied poor,

and charity to the incapable and distressed. The Rectory alone had suffered. Its windows, dim with dust, were opened a few inches once a day by the hand of an aged housekeeper, while its walks and alleys were suffered to run wild; the only thing which seemed to take the least enjoyment in them being the tame white doe, and even she had lost much of the familiarity consequent on the nature of her education.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Thou hast called up sensations sad but sweet,
  Hast pictured faces that have long been gone,
Hast left me for the past some cause to greet,
  And for the future much to ponder on.
I, like the bee, have drank a luscious draught,
  Have reft the honey from the loveliest leaves,
And lightly has my airy spirit laugh'd
  At things for which it now so deeply grieves.
Would that the phantoms which around I see
Could render back reality to me!

It was a bright clear day, on the ninth of November, when two men made their way through the dense masses of well-dressed London tradesfolks who thronged each side of the Strand, and filled every corner, window, and even roof which could command a view of the passage that thoroughfare afforded. One of them was muffled

in a cloak, but the other, the taller of the two, was dressed for display with extreme richness and attention.

"I tell thee," exclaimed the latter, "I 'll wager a bottle of sack that I find out who she is. Such eyes, such a face, such a figure! by my life I think she is the only woman in the world that could afford a fair excuse for man's entering into the holy state of matrimony; let alone money — a man may commit any violence for money—even to the loss of his right hand."

"And pray how long has she been honoured with the notice of the worshipful Colonel Charteris?"* said a voice, the proprietor of which was Master Surface.

"How long?" replied the colonel; "why not an hour yet, though it seems an age. I saw her but now as she got into her carriage at Charing Cross, and drove in the direction of

* A man in those days notorious for his depravity, and depicted in some of the drawings of Hogarth.

Temple Bar. John Gourlay follows, and you know that he is a hound not to be thrown off the scent even by the doubling of a woman."

As they said this they approached Temple Bar, where, as it was the first Lord Mayor's Day in the then present reign, and the first visit of the queen to the city, they found the most splendid preparations for her reception. Wreaths of artificial flowers were extended across the street, and banners of every hue and size floated from every house, while groups of well-dressed females presented themselves at the windows and temporary scaffolds, with scarfs and garlands in their hands by which to wave their welcome to their royal mistress. The sun was bright, the sky, as if in approbation of the joyous scene, had lifted the misty veil which usually at that season of the year enshrouded the city, and the beams of day danced brightly on the dome of St. Paul's, while each human countenance beneath wore such a happy expression of innocent mirth and expec-

tation, that one would have supposed crime, for a space at least, had shrunk cowering in the dark caverns of iniquity. Indeed, even an observant mind might well have been led into the erroneous supposition that sin had resolved to leave one page in the annals of history unpolluted by its stainful hand. Not so, however: amidst that ocean of merry faces, beneath the mortal sea of human beings which exulted in the sun, ran a foul under-current of vicious propensity. The thief, the pickpocket, the pander, and the profligate, were at work. By the side of the confiding husband, and into the ear of the listening, the hesitating, and therefore the lost wife, the designing libertine poured the poison of his corrupt desires; while the suborned spy in other cases watched the natural circumstance, for the purpose of strangling truth, and of distorting the simplest fact into the false and knotted intricacy necessary to the promulgation and establishment of some lucratively desired guilt.

Master Surface and Colonel Charteris had proceeded some distance betwixt the lines of the orange and red regiments of the train-bands, which lined the way from Temple Bar to Ludgate, when they were met by a small plainly-attired, dark-visaged little man, who at once whispered in the ear of the colonel, and then dropped a few paces behind.

"So!" exclaimed Charteris, "John Gourlay has not failed his master; he has marked the quarry to her nest in a low platform, by the side of Bow Church, whither we will repair to take counsel and make further observation. He tells me she is accompanied by an elderly lady; what! my friend Surface, will you say a civil thing to an old woman for once in your life, and thus serve your friend at no very great expense?"

"Have with you, my gallant colonel!" replied Surface; "you will do at some other time as much for me."

The two worthies then proceeded under the direction of their attendant to a situation where they could command a view of their intended victims.

By the side of Bow Church, and opposite a magnificent balcony, which had been prepared for the queen, whence she was to witness the gorgeous procession and mummeries got up in honour of her visit, was placed a low platform, simply guarded by a single rail from the crowd, and raised only a few feet above the level of the street. In this platform were congregated many ladies, who from their knowledge of some of the civic dignitaries were thus accommodated, in order that they might the better witness the grand spectacle of the day. Within about twenty yards of this place Surface and Colonel Charteris stood to make their observations.

The day was clear but cold, and not wishing perhaps to meet the gaze of so many spectators

who had at that moment no other occupation than to stare at the component parts of the assembled multitude, the ladies to whom John Gourlay pointed were closely cloaked and hooded.

The moment Surface fixed his eyes upon them, he seized the Colonel by the arm and cried : "A truce to your attempts, fair sir ; the youngest of the two is a friend of mine."

"Come, come, Master Surface," rejoined Charteris, "that round assertion passes not for current coin with me ; honour, sir, even among thieves. How the devil do you know who or what she is when you have not even seen a feature of her face ?"

"I will swear to the old one's cloak ; I will swear to that provoking and nameless grace which ever seems to hang around the young one's figure," said Surface, "and if you will look into the crowd opposite to them, you will see an ill-visaged ruffian of mine, with the gib-

bet legibly written on his brow, bestowing leers and winks alternately on me and the persons to whom that respectable functionary wishes to invite my gracious attention."

"By my soul," replied Colonel Charteris, "I see no individual of the sort!"

"Nay, nay, look again," continued Surface; "my retainer did but display great natural curiosity, research, and manual dexterity as to the contents of the tidy old gentleman's pocket who stares so contentedly around him; he has done now, and is all the better for another man's handkerchief — see, he again endeavours to fix my attention."

"So he does," replied the Colonel; "beckon him this way, when an untutored display of the information he has obtained will convince me. I will in that case, you lucky villain, leave the ground in your undisputed possession; hang me if I can witness your triumph though, so you must turn over the old lady to your

amiable retainer, whose dextrous activity could supply her with pocket-handkerchiefs, were his solicitations or violence to convert her into a second Niobe."

Surface signaled the man they spoke of to his side, who, forcing his way through the throng, waited not to be addressed. "Bramble my body," growled the ruffian Smith, "why your honour, we're still in luck as far as chasing goes; I'm blessed if we an't right again — that ere's the lady, sure enough."

"Adieu then, Surface," exclaimed Colonel Charteris; "I leave you — London is a wide place, and all the world looks well to-day."

So saying he turned on his heel and was about to depart, when Surface grasped his arm. "Stay!" whispered the latter, "you can, you must assist me; I am here without servants or money, and alone I shall be unable to put my scheme in practice; it is a bold and violent one though, and ought to succeed from its very

rashness. Words, entreaties, are thrown away on yonder girl, by force alone she can be made mine: Charteris, I have assisted you before now — will you return the compliment?"

"Well," replied the Colonel, after a slight hesitation, "I have nothing on my hands to-night, and I care not if I do; how do you intend to gain possession of her person?"

At this moment the shouts of the multitude at Temple Bar rose loudly into the air, accompanied by the Tower-guns, which heralded in a voice of thunder the entrance of the queen into the city. Martial music soon after was heard to mingle with the voice of the people; rows of heads were seen to lean anxiously from the windows in Cheapside; garlands, hats, scarfs, and hands, acknowledged the presence of the sovereign, and the banners of the Artillery Company which preceded the queen began to appear over the heads of the crowd, and upon the space kept clear for the approach of the procession.

Though delayed by the speeches of the work-house children and Blue-coat boys, which had been offered to her attention at the church of St. Paul's, the sovereign, apparently unfatigued, ascended to the royal balcony, whence she was to witness the splendid cavalcade and masked devices that had been prepared for her by the loyal citizens of London.

When the queen, accompanied by the Duke of Devonshire,* Lord Jersey, and all the great officers of state, as well as by the beauty and graces of her court, appeared on the balcony, the shout that rent the air was long and loud, and continued at intervals while the cavalcade was passing. At a little distance to the rear and on one side of the queen stood Sandron, dressed in the richest fashion, with his noble and lofty figure displayed to the fullest advantage. Behind the queen and among the court beauties, the Lady Margaret Bonville was also most

* Lord High Steward.

conspicuous, her soft and feminine loveliness serving as an excellent foil to the bold and imperious expression of the now Duchess of Marlborough.

Sandron's eye wandered from the passing procession to the crowd around, and at last he found his attention inexplicably fixed on a low platform on the opposite side the street.

At first it seemed to him that the colour of the cloak of a lady attracted his gaze, but in a little while he found himself tracing in the folds of the cloak the contour of a familiar figure, and likening the countenance beneath its hood, though all unseen, to that of the once cherished companion of his early days. He was vexed, he was even angry with himself for that which he inwardly termed the childish folly of his thoughts, and, turning his head the other way, he regarded the loveliest figure in the group more immediately around him.

Inadvertently he again turned to the cloak on

the platform, and discovered that, concealed as the eyes within its folds might be, at all events by the position of the head they were directed to his countenance; and more, that when the wearer of the cloak perceived that *she* was the object of *his* attention, she turned suddenly away, and with a hasty gesture more closely concealed her features. That gesture was but the work of a moment; but there was an ungloved, white, and beautifully proportioned hand used in it, whose affectionate pressure and softness had so often been felt by him, that he was immediately aware of the presence of Louisa Marmaduke.

What then became of his doughty resolutions to forget her? whither flew the sense of injury which had been so keenly cherished? and what became of the cold and icy chains in which he deemed that he had bound up each affectionate inclination to the once loved but since *ever* to be discarded object of his first affection? Even on the sight of that small white hand, pride,

imagined injury, and cool determination, melted away like the last year's snow, and the words of Corah crept within his ear. It seemed indeed as if that girl, possessed of some magic principle, had the power of conveying whispers from a distance far amidst the crowd, for regarding him with a countenance, the expression of which was not to be misunderstood, the beautiful gipsy herself appeared.

For a moment it seemed to Sandron as if the crowd and the whole scene swam before his eyes, or became enshrouded in mist, when, as his immediate attendance on the queen was not required, he withdrew from the spot, but, having recovered his self-possession, shortly returned to his previous station. Corah was then no longer to be seen, but still there was the cloak he knew, or thought that he knew, to contain Louisa. Delusive as the last momentary occurrence had appeared, there was still sufficient reality before him on the platform, and in the soft glance of Lady Mar-

garet, who had remarked what she deemed to have been his passing indisposition, to make him believe the evidence of his senses.

Wild barbaric music and strange cries now approached, proceeding from an extraordinary group in the cavalcade. A party of men dressed as Satyrs came dancing and rioting along, some drinking from bowls, while others performed strange antics and grimaces, occasionally even displacing in their mirth the cocked hats of the trained bands, and evidently creating as much confusion as possible. When these men arrived at the platform, some of them even raised themselves on the protecting rail, and made gestures as if they were about to steal a salute in passing from the ladies who occupied it. This rude jest was received with every demonstration of delight by the inferior portions of the populace, but what was Sandron's indignation and fury when he saw two of the satyrs actually seize the figure he so firmly believed to be Louisa

Marmaduke in their arms, and rudely lift her over the rail; while the lady who seemed to be her companion screamed loudly for assistance. Sandron rushed from the balcony, and in an instant was in the street, his features bespeaking the violence of his anger and determination; but what availed the strength of a single man against the pressure of a multitude! His appeal to the bystanders to assist him in the rescue of a lady, in spite of his royal uniform and noble mien, was received with a mute stare of wonder, or with shouts of laughter, and even the officers of the Life Guards, as well as those of the trained bands, good-naturedly interposed their persons to prevent his angry advance, deeming that under misapprehension or supposition of insult, his hand being on his sword, he was about to commit a personal assault, and that too in the immediate presence of the crown.

The outrage on Louisa Marmaduke had been regarded as a preconcerted surprise, and as a

portion of the entertainment offered to the queen, while the bystanders even applauded the real consternation of Lady Monkton, crying out how well she acted. By the arms of the men who were dressed as satyrs, through the din of their wild instruments of music, and by the general shout, noise, and confusion, all distinct applications from the ladies for assistance were rendered useless, and by a lawless band of ruffians Louisa Marmaduke was hurried she knew not whither.

Shocked, dispirited, and almost ashamed of the public exhibition he had made, cruelly called for as his exertions really were, Sandron returned to his attendance on the queen, and even there, from all but the Lady Margaret, whose quick discernment seemed to detect more than met the public eye, he had to undergo the raillery consequent on his supposed delusion.

"Indeed, my good Master Sandron," said the queen, "we shall at least know— though deeming lightly of your discretion — who is

the aptest knight to rescue damsels in distress. Why, my good youth, that scene was a portion of the pageant schemed for our exclusive pleasure."

The queen then smiled on him good-humouredly, and the court proceeded to the city banquet, the evening concluding with illuminations, which, according to Maitland, "vied with the sun in glory."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A vein had burst—and her sweet lips' pure dies
  Were dabbled with the deep blood which ran o'er;
And her head droop'd as when the lily lies
  O'ercharged with rain; her summon'd handmaids bore
Their lady to her couch with gushing eyes;
  Of herbs and cordials they produced their store,
But she defied all means they could employ,
Like one life could not hold, nor death destroy.

Days laid she in that state unchanged, though chill,
  With nothing livid, still her lips were red:
She had no pulse, but death seemed absent still;
Corruption came not in each mind to kill
  All hope: to look upon her sweet face bred
New thoughts of life, for it seem'd full of soul,
She had so much, earth could not claim the whole.

BYRON.

IT had been at the request of Louisa Marmaduke that Lady Monkton had consented to attend the ceremony of the queen's visit to the

city, and by her desire also that they should not accept places more suitable to their rank, but repair thither so dressed as even to remain, if they were so inclined, unrecognized by their acquaintance. Perhaps some latent desire to observe her former lover without his being aware of the fact might have prompted Louisa Marmaduke to this proceeding, and by such observation to obtain for her actual confirmation or otherwise of his bearing and conduct when in the presence of Lady Margaret, to whom, it was whispered by the world, there was every prospect of his being one day united.

During the time that she had been separated from Sandron, she had taught herself to believe that to a great extent she had become indifferent to him, but when his graceful figure was again placed before her, all those tender associations with which each smile, glance, and motion of his were associated, rushed tumultuously on her mind with the force of their best and brightest

hours. So intimately connected was he with the most trivial circumstance of her existence, that the violet, cowslip, and primrose, or even the still more humble flowers of the wilderness, which she might at any time wear in her bosom, reminded her of the sunny bank, and sunnier days, when he gathered the first of the season for her in the banks and groves of Sandron Hall.

At no time during their separation had Lady Monkton lost an opportunity, even after the hateful Master Surface was out of favour, of plying the ear of her niece with the often false and always poisonous insinuations of the scandal-mongers of the day; adding to their envious detraction of the best and most beautiful, the bitterness and perverted scruples of her own selfish and party-emanating animosity. After all, little more than insidious hints and dubious implications reached Louisa Marmaduke; for though the disappointed, thwarted, and in some cases and to

more or less extent, really vicious male and female members of society promulgated certain insinuations, yet they advanced nothing distinctly against our hero's moral character, and even those, whose reputation through his acts of gallantry they did attempt to stain, were still cherished and upheld by friends and connections who had the best right to judge of their actions, and ample means of marking their condemnation if required. It was in that time, as at the present, a lamentable fact in the position and tone of society, that the voice of the least amiable portions of it had an undue preponderance, simply for the reason that vice was armed in bold effrontery, with an inclination by all means and applications to reduce every thing above it to its own level; while virtue, modest, retiring, and self-content, courted neither publicity nor display. There was one rude and unhappy circumstance attending the history of Sandron and Louisa, the recollection of which would

steal to her pillow at all hours of the night, and seem to sit there like a hideous scorpion ready to sting the lovely dreamer into a state of painful consciousness—it was the circumstance connected with the locks of hair.

To obtain and keep such remembrances was a proof not to be set aside that between Sandron and some others there had been an interchange of love passages, which proved beyond the possibility of doubt a highly culpable levity and inconstancy; while to the sworn object of his first and therefore perhaps truest affection it was evident and direct treason. In Sandron's presence this latter circumstance might be forgotten, but many a happy hour was due from his hands in atonement for the tears so frequently occasioned by its remembrance. Had Sandron been a slave, passive, obedient, and obviously and obsequiously regretful of Louisa Marmaduke's apparent neglect and displeasure, the case in all probability would have been

widely different, for such a line of conduct in a temporarily discarded lover will often in addition to that which might have passed off in a gust of passion, induce sensations more approaching to the lasting calm of contempt. In the present circumstances the very fact that Sandron was *not* a slave, passive and obedient to the anger or caprice of his mistress, but that he was resolved to lead widely rather than follow closely, was in his favour; and though Louisa Marmaduke loved him with an exalted affection, based upon the purest and best grounds, still that vanity to which all human nature is liable, and from which it ought not to be entirely exempt, was gratified when she saw that the person who ruled her heart had also at his command the homage of others.

Louisa was keenly observing Sandron's method of bearing himself in the presence of Lady Margaret, when he discovered that the concealed face beneath the hood of the cloak which had so

much interested him was turned in his direction; but when she was seized on by the wild group of men so quaintly dressed, in such a presence, and in the midst of so much din and noise, all momentary recollection deserted her, and she had scarcely power even to call for assistance. More dead than alive she was borne away, muffled to the head, and almost suffocated in her cloak. Four of the satyrs detached themselves from their companions, and carried her to a house in a low dark alley, whence, two of the party having consulted together in whispers, she was speedily removed to a hackney-coach.

Here, for the first time, her breathing being evidently too much confined, the hood was taken from her face, when Louisa Marmaduke discovered that four men with cloaks over their figures and with masks on were her companions. She was about to speak, but the one who sat opposite to her with a threatening hand offered a handkerchief to her lips, to shew that silence was re-

quired: thus constrained, she again shrank in mute terror from the violence of her captors. In silence they drove for some way, when one of the men put his head from the window, as if to ascertain that there was no one in pursuit of them, when, drawing the mask from his still worse-looking features, he suddenly and with some emotion exclaimed:

"Bramble my body, there's her dog, Spider! let me out of this cursed cage; we are nosed by a vixen fox, with a ken against which this moving barn is no go; let me out, I say; I'll have the vermin yet by the scuff of the neck, and reckon up old scores."

So saying, with a glance at the figure who seemed to be the leader of the party, he called to the coachman to stop, and opening the door for himself, he sprang into the street. Louisa seized on the opportunity to attempt to precipitate herself after him, in the hope of bringing public attention to her unhappy condition,

but in this she was prevented, when, the door being again closed, they continued on their way.

By the letters on the corner of a house, she now perceived that they were in Tottenham Court Road, and her attention to that fact having been observed, the hood of her cloak was again drawn over her eyes, and bound there with a handkerchief, in which state she remained till she was lifted from the coach into a house, carried up stairs, and deposited upon a sofa. The party then whispered together, and several of them having quitted the room, she sprang to her feet, but her further intentions were arrested by the voice and hand of a woman. "Stay, young lady," said the latter, "I will unbind your eyes."

The hood of her cloak being removed, Louisa Marmaduke gazed wildly around her. To be in the presence of one of her own sex was a consolation. "Where am I?" she exclaimed; "in

the name of Heaven protect me from further violence, and the reward of God and man shall be at your acceptance."

"You are safe enough for the matter of that," replied the harsh voice of the woman; "safer, perhaps, than you will like to be — under my care; so let that suffice you."

As she said this, Louisa observed that she was a tall masculine woman, scarce forty years of age, with a countenance though unfeminine in its lineaments, still bearing the appearance of having once possessed a character of beauty. She looked altogether like one who had seen better days, or who in former times had been happy. There was something so forbidding in the woman's aspect, as well as repulsive in her manner, that Louisa gathered not a hope of pity, when, abandoning herself to an agony of grief, she sunk helplessly on the sofa.

"Come, come, my pretty mistress," exclaimed the woman, "there's no use in your taking on

so. Dry your eyes, arrange your hair, and call up your best looks; smiles and beauty are virtues which pass current here, and if they don't help you, nothing else will."

"Oh! if you are human," replied Louisa, "if you possess a heart that acknowledges one throb of compassion, I implore you protect me from the return of those dreadful men: save me—go to my friends—give them information of the outrage that has been committed. I have but few friends in London, but tell him, even him, whom you might have seen at the pageant today, Master Sandron, and he will raise the city rather than not rescue me from the horrors by which I am surrounded."

"Tell *him*, lady," returned the woman. "I know the young gallant you mean; do you *really* think that *he would* stir a step in *your* defence? ho, ho! a fine joke, truly; here, listen and look, and set your heart at rest. There," she continued, thrusting in her hand, and with-

drawing money from her pocket; "I want not gold; and you may as well try to preach to those iron bars which secure that window from their stanchions, as move my heart to compassion. Marry come up! I was once beautiful as you are, and what compassion did I meet with? No, no; there was none for me, and none shall you have at my hands. What is timidity, modesty, or beauty? why mere tinsel, to be rubbed off by the rough intercourse of the world; keep them, my pretty mistress, if you can. But there —there's the devil coming." A step was heard ascending the stair. "My name's Hayes, ma'am;" I'm not ashamed of my name," said the woman, raising her voice on purpose to be heard by the person approaching, "and my husband is below; if you want any thing you'll please to stamp your little foot upon the floor; ha, ha! and if that's too light to make so much noise, why you may knock with the leg of the chair."

So saying, Mistress Hayes withdrew, and a man, cloaked and masked, one of those who had conducted Louisa to her present place of confinement, entered the room. Cloak and mask being thrown aside, Master Surface stood before her. Louisa arose from the sofa, and recoiled to the further corner of the apartment.

"You need not shun me," he exclaimed in his most persuasive tone of voice; "indeed, dear lady, you could not do so if you would. I make that remark not with an intention of alarming, but simply to render you fully aware of the nature of the circumstance in which you are placed." Louisa was about to speak, but he continued. "Hear me calmly and dispassionately; I would have you comprehend every thing to its utmost extent, and then use that clear and discriminating judgment for which I believe you to be remarkable. My errors shall be laid before you, as well as the line of conduct

by which I hope to retrieve them—listen. When first I sought your hand, it was an involuntary act; fascinated, overcome by the obvious perfections of your mind and figure, I forgot an unfortunate and unhappy tie formed in earlier days — in short I need not allude to it, as some of the circumstances have been already before the world.* That tie, dissolved as it was before from all moral obligation, is now entirely set aside by the death of the party, and I am once more free to dispose of my hand and title. Yes, lady, I have gone now too far to disguise my rank—I am a peer of Scotland, and, such as my title is, such as my fortunes are, I willingly lay them at your feet; may I hope, may I venture to beseech you to at least take my offer into your favourable consideration. I have friends in foreign courts; I am at this moment entrusted with commissions of high import from foreign powers; there is yet a wide field open to me, in

* Alluding, probably, to his marriage.—See State Trials.

which to gain an honourable distinction, and through which the errors of my youth may be forgotten.* For your sake I will quit the ill-advised companions and haunts of my previous life, and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have recalled to a virtuous sense of duty one not altogether unworthy of your future estimation. Dear lady, thus on my knee I ask you to pardon all former passages that have passed between us, and to think favourably of my present offer."

During this address Louisa drew her beautiful figure up to its full height, and the cloak which had been still loosely attached to her shoulders fell to the ground as she replied.—

"Of what use, my lord, if so I am to term you, is it in the conqueror to mock his captive with the semblance of a petition? Set me free, prefer your suit, and I will answer it."

"No, lady, the time for such a proceeding is

* State Trials.

past; I stand too far committed now to throw myself on mortal clemency, your reply must be rendered *here*. Think, reflect well, ere you make your selection: by wedding me you have an opportunity of requiting the heartless neglect and contemptuous desertion which you have received at the hands of Charles Sandron, and of assuming a higher rank than he, were he inclined to wed you, has it in his power to bestow; take a loftier view of it if you will, you may even benefit the political situation of your country. My rank and your own fortune will place us on a footing with the best in the land; abroad and in other realms the blot brought to my escutcheon by the wild folly of my youth will be forgotten; honour, wealth, and happiness are well within our reach, and lady, dearest lady, I crave your wise decision."

"Hear it," said Louisa Marmaduke, "hear it, my lord, unconditionally, and without hope of change, without the possibility of an alteration

in my fixed resolve — I *refuse*, I *scorn* your offer."

Surface rose from his knee, and, with a compressed lip strode up to Louisa, and seized her by the wrist.

"Look," he cried, pointing to the well-secured window, "escape in that quarter is impossible, the doors are equally well guarded, even your shrieks would not reach the ears of the public. You are wholly in the power of a desperate man, one, though willing to gain an end by gentle means, not accustomed to be deterred by the laws human or divine, should his milder endeavours fail him and fall short of his purpose. There is no disgrace in my present proposal, but there may be both danger and disgrace consequent on your refusal. No answer now," at the same time loosing her wrist, "think upon my proposals, reflect upon the power which is in my hands, be a friend to yourself, and all may yet be well. One other

word," he continued, pausing with the door in his hand; "I enjoin you solemnly, make no attempt to escape, for you are watched by those who, if thwarted, may become dangerous."

Master Surface then quitted the apartment, and turned the key in the door.

When Louisa Marmaduke was left to herself, all her fortitude forsook her: the shock which her nervous system had received in the morning, increased by the dark threats of the desperate man who had so recently quitted the room, overcame her, and she fell upon the floor. The noise of her fall brought Mistress Hayes into the room, who carried her to the bed and administered the usual remedies for restoration, but all in vain: for a length of time Louisa Marmaduke neither spoke nor stirred, and when at last returning animation opened her eyes, they were tearless, glazed, and bright; while the words which escaped her were wandering,

incoherent, and misapplied. So alarming did her symptoms become, that a medical practitioner was called in, whose opinion was confirmatory of the most serious and imminent danger.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Love bears within its breast the very germ
Of change; and how should this be otherwise?
That violent things more quickly find a term
Is shown through Nature's whole analogies;
And how should the most fierce of all be firm?
Would you have endless lightning in the skies?
Methinks Love's very title says enough:
How should "the *tender* passion" e'er be *tough?*

BYRON.

THE effect produced by the occurrence related in a former chapter upon the manner and bearing of Charles Sandron was remarked by the whole court; indeed so painful did any allusion to the subject, or to his attempt to rescue a forlorn damsel from the fawns and satyrs, as it was jocularly described, appear, that those who

really liked Sandron desisted in pity from the annoyance, while some of the gentlemen who were beyond measure delighted in the opportunity to taunt and sneer at their hitherto triumphant rival abstained from further persecution only because they saw that he was in a frame of mind likely to seize on any source on which to fix a quarrel. They were moreover aware that in personal combat he had a dangerous eye and hand to deal with. It was evident, that however ridiculous his interference with the pageant might appear in the eyes of casual observers, he himself, now that surprise and momentary impulse was over, deduced from it some serious reasons for anxiety. For him the royal banquet of that day had no charms, the most costly viands passed him untouched, while the wine which he drank, instead of exhilarating his spirits, only tended to redden and contract his brow into an appearance of perplexed and stormy uncertainty.

Sandron, who at all other times had been the life and soul of the society immediately around him, now sat silent, with a mind abstracted from the gay scene with which his presence was immediately connected, while with the Lady Margaret it was precisely the reverse. She who usually was calm, and though not silent, gracefully composed, was suddenly changed into what might almost be pronounced a brilliant and fascinating coquette. She appeared for the first time in her life to avoid Sandron, and yet to purposely linger near; to bestow her conversation on others, but to direct her looks at him; in short, there was more than one brave gallant who at the close of that day cast a glance of triumph upon Sandron, as much as to say:—"I have supplanted you at last."

The conduct of Lady Margaret, the triumphant bearing of his rivals, had no effect whatever upon Sandron; unmoved, and as if unconsciously, he beheld it all, and seemed only to

long for the hour when he might be emancipated from his attendance upon the court.

The queen had risen from the banquet, and was preparing for her departure, while, forlorn and even wretched, Sandron stood with downcast looks, leaning against one of the pillars of the Hall, waiting until he should be summoned to attend. The rustle of a lady's dress approached his locality, and ere he could raise his thoughtful eyes, the suppressed tones of a well-known voice reached his ear.

"Charles," whispered Lady Margaret, having re-assumed her natural and beautifully placid demeanour — "Charles, the last two hours of my life have been hateful to me: during the passage of the moments they contained, I studied from a page torn from the world's volume, and learned to deceive: oh! I have cast from me the evil record now, and my heart and lips are no longer the jarring emblems of light and shadow. To make you feel through pique or jealousy is

insulting to us both. Forgive me, Sandron, though I cannot forgive myself!"

As Lady Margaret thus spoke she was close at his side. Sandron turned on her a glance of admiration, and unperceived by the rest of the court who were now fast assembling around them, their hands for a moment were clasped together. The different carriages were then announced that were to convey the royal party from the city, Sandron and Lady Margaret were separated, and the queen retired to her palace, amidst the cheers and rejoicings of her people.

When Charles Sandron was in possession of the privacy of his own apartment, he reviewed the extraordinary circumstance of the passed day, and even tried to convince himself that his eyes had deceived him. This was the more probable, as he had never seen a feature of the face of the cloaked figure whom he had taken for Louisa, and in addition to this, all the bystanders who were neither in love, nor prone to expect dis-

guised damsels in the crowd before them, and who were, therefore, cooler and better judges of the scene, concurred in pronouncing the seizure of the lady as being part and parcel of the pageant offered for the amusement of the queen.

The fact, however, of the presence of the gipsy Corah, and her evident anxiety that Sandron should observe the lady in the cloak, could not be attributed to delusion, and the more he pondered over that circumstance, the more convinced was he that he had witnessed an outrage upon the once dearly-loved companion of his childhood. There were sensations truly horrible in the idea, that, perhaps at that very moment, Louisa Marmaduke with all her attractions of youth, innocence, and beauty, might be subject to the fiend-like passions and violence of a desperate and abandoned man: that she might have been borne away to the haunts of infamy, where the supplications of virtue would be mis-

understood or despised, and where vice triumphant would glory in the degradation of all purer things to its own polluted level.

Louisa Marmaduke, his first love, his earliest friend, affectionate and beautiful as she was in the happier hours of his life, her every look, word, and deed, were pictured vividly to his imagination, and in the full bitterness of regret, he cursed the hour that had brought about their separation. Sleep visited not his eyelids that night, but the lagging hours were passed in vain regrets and impassioned vows—vows which, all too late, were intended to bind his future life to one, who, in all probability, was lost to him for ever; or, if not altogether lost, perhaps the flower then to be regained would be rifled of all its best and sweetest treasures.

Sandron arose in the morning the shadow of his former self; the gaiety of his manner, the light and buoyant step, were gone; the roving, arch, and smiling eye, which used to peer into

the face of every pretty woman that passed him, as if to ascertain if her heart could favourably appreciate such homage as he was inclined to offer, was changed; and in place of the free gaze of a man of fashion, his brow now assumed the thoughtful but almost desponding expression of one resolved to trace some hidden mystery to an end, determined to drink out a cup to the dregs, ay, though the last drop should, by its blighting influence, confirm to him all the horrors of a justly suspected poison.

It became a question with him then as to where he should turn for the best information. London was a wide place, and the facilities for concealment which the Alsatia of vice offered to the fugitive from detection were numerous: whither should he seek for the only known witness to the transaction, or where apply for assistance? At first he thought of an application to the Compter, but in this he was deterred by his want of evidence and the already experienced

inefficiency and vulgar flippancy of one of its chief magistrates. Jonathan Wild, who had now succeeded to the situation of the City Marshal, might assist him, but no sure redress could be reckoned on at his hands, for if the guilty parties bribed more highly than those who sought to arraign them, all chance of detection was sure to be defeated. On Corah, then, and on Corah only, had he any hope or reliance.

For a space he considered the propriety of an application to Lady Monkton, but from this he shrunk because of her well-known hostility towards him, and even doubt as to whether or not she herself might in some way or other have been privy to the carrying off of her niece. In the mind of Sandron, Master Surface was the chief abettor of the outrage, and as Lady Monkton had at one time shewn herself to be so favourably inclined towards that gentleman, he felt averse to communicate with her in any way whatever.

The doubt and difficulty of his situation seemed to have paralized our hero's mind, for he decided on no active measures of any sort, and having been on duty at the palace all day, late in the afternoon he wandered forth into St. James's Park.

The weather was wild and stormy, dark and swiftly-passing masses of vapour hurried across the sky with their western edges tinted with a blood-red hue from the descended sun, while the yellow and seared leaves from the elm-trees around strewed his path or rose eddying into the air, as if some mystic power bade them move or dance to celebrate the approach of winter. Sandron paused by the brink of the ornamental water; the wild-fowl were clamorous for the evening flight, longing to sail in the stormy gusts above, and the deer wandered in the lower parts of the park as if in search of the most sheltered spot whereon to make their lair.

The cool fresh air blew favourably on San-

dron's brow, removing the feverish sensation and calming by degrees the perplexity of his mental faculties. Tired with the efforts of the day his brain relaxed, and as if to recruit its energies, it wandered from internal occupation to the more trivial objects of the surrounding scene. His attention then became fixed on a group of deer, which appeared to be curiously and timidly following some little animal approaching the place where he stood along the edge of the water, while, at the same time, many of the wild-fowl swam coasting the shore, intent on similar observation.

The creature which they followed came nearer still — it was a little dog; scarcely noticed by Sandron it arrived within a few yards, and sat down opposite to him with a look of timid uncertainty. It was the faithful follower of Corah; Sandron, the instant he was aware of this, enticed it by name; with a bound it sprang forward and lay on its back at his foot, as if entreating his

further notice, while Sandron gazed eagerly round for the gipsy. There was no human figure in sight; the noise and rattle of the distant streets came mournfully on his ear, and a desert could not have seemed more lonely than the spot on which he stood. The little animal having obtained the desired attention rose and looked wistfully around, proceeded a few paces and then returned again seemingly uncertain whether to go or to remain. It was in vain that Sandron walked hither and thither, and peered through the gloom which was fast obscuring the scene, in search of the gipsy-girl, whom his mind associated with the little dog before him; not a human creature was near. He turned eastward, westward, north and south, but not a living thing save the animals we have mentioned met his eye. The only difference that occurred was, and that in the distracted state of his mind did not at the moment strike him, that Spider, when going in certain directions, played and leaped joyfully before him,

when at other times he lagged mournfully in the rear.

Tired at length with his ineffectual search, Sandron once more stood on the banks of the canal and looked on its dark and mysterious surface. The wildness of the sky, the gloom of the hour, and the exhausted state of his mind, were all prone to engender fearful thoughts and forebodings, and Sandron gazed upon the ruffled water as if it had been the cold shroud of the once quick and beautiful. Strange it is, that from some extraordinary property in the mysterious formation of the mind of man, when the brain is most wearied and depressed, its labours are oftentimes the more horribly gigantic. Arousing himself, then, from the painful trance into which circumstances and situation had consigned him, Sandron strode towards the palace, and entering the garden which was free to the attendants of the court, he encountered the Duchess of Marlborough, Lady Margaret, and

some others; when as the party turned to prolong their exercise in the garden, he soon found himself walking apart from the rest with the youngest and most beautiful of the group.

There was a pause in their conversation which had commenced under some degree of mutual embarrassment, on common-place matters. Lady Margaret after some hesitation resumed. There was nothing of anger in her manner, there was no affectation of coldness; she spoke as a sister might speak, affectionately yet sorrowfully — it was thus.

"Charles, I have longed for an opportunity of conversing with you unfettered and free from the obstructions of society; in the palace as in the dear wild forest we have often pledged ourselves that there should ever be truth between us: let there now be no deceit. Strange circumstances have happened, which have thwarted and pained some latent energy of your nature; I would wish you to impart the extent of them to me."

Sandron hesitated and remained silent.

"Tell me," she continued; "there is more, I know there is more in the passage of yesterday than most people believe; your suppositions, had they been erroneous, would have been cleared up long ere this; *who* is it therefore that you suppose to be carried away?"

At Sandron's heart there breathed for a moment the poisonous whispers of a deceitful fiend; however, the voice of his better resolution prevailed, and he replied.—

"Dearest Lady Margaret, I *am* unhappy; full of faults as I am, wrong as I may have been, I will not deceive one so good, so pure, so perfect as you are; you shall know all, and if the errors I have committed banish me from your love, oh! let me share your pity, for a favourable consideration from you, even if divested of its warmer attributes, is worth all the wilder considerations of the world. I am convinced that the person whom you saw carried off by a

portion of the people acting in the pageant was one with whom I had been bred up from infancy. In the halls of my fathers we had been reared together; possessing neither brother nor sister, the cold vacuum in my breast, which God had apportioned as the natural resting-place of those beautiful affections, grew warm beneath her gentle influence, and like the sun on the face of nature, she shed one universal light on sweets and flowers, which in their number and perfection were well worthy to have known each a separate source of joy. Our attachment ripened with our years, when soon to the long-tried and gradually increased affection of the more than brother and sister was added the stronger but not less beautiful endearment of unforbidden, innocent love, confessed and appreciated only at the moment of our separation. Circumstances since then, the machinations of the villanous, the covetous, and designing, have tended to keep us apart, and oh! the violence

of my own temper I fear has been to our enemies their best ally. Her friends, at least those who call themselves so, and with whom she has associated, have not been my friends, and my actions may have been represented to her in their most unfavourable light. In many instances I know I have been hasty, perhaps culpable to the last degree, for I am not one of those who can dally on the brink of a precipice, look down upon its danger, and yet not have the resolution to face it or to fly, nor am I one to endure the bare suspicion of 'keeping but a corner in the thing I love:' unsuspicious faith, unhesitating devotion must be mine; I can make no return without them."

Lady Margaret listened to this recital with a downcast, melancholy expression of countenance, but the temporary cloud passed off from her beautiful features as Sandron concluded, and she said in her usual calm and collected manner—

"But tell me, have you ascertained beyond

the possibility of doubt that this extraordinary outrage *has* taken place; have you made inquiries of the lady who accompanied her to the city?"

"No, dearest lady, to Lady Monkton I have not presented myself, for she has ever been to me the bitterest foe, and were the life and death of Louisa Marmaduke to be at stake, she would be the last person to render me the required information. Oh! it seems as if age not only stole from the female the graces of her person, but in many instances it turns her heart to stone; in the bitterness with which some old women regard their own advance in years, they forget the time when they themselves were young, and grow unknown to pity. From the previous conduct of Lady Monkton, as regards the man I more than suspect to be the instigator of this outrage, I even suspect the possibility of her connivance."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Lady Margaret,

her beautiful cheek for a moment suffused with the blush of indignation; "a woman of rank and station could not be so base."

"Alas!" rejoined Sandron, "dearest lady, you are not aware of half the enormity of which even those who rank as the leaders of the best society can be guilty. For political purposes, for speculation, matrimonial or otherwise, women will be found to associate themselves with and countenance men of the most abandoned characters, who, were they poor or powerless, would have long been driven from honest society, and incarcerated in jail. Amiability, talent, honour (and not always birth) can make no head against the power of gold and bigotry. Though I am far from poor, though my family is as ancient as the hills in their domain, yet my political principles being in opposition to those of Lady Monkton, it is sufficient to make her desire that the ample fortune of her niece should be disseminated in other channels. A marriage with Louisa Mar-

maduke would have been a rich one; my rival — out upon the fact that such a villain can be entitled to the name! let his rank be what it may—was poor; I believe that both confiscation and outlawry have stripped him of all his possessions; for him, for his political principles, if principle in any thing he has, Lady Monkton was prepared to have sacrificed her niece's earthly welfare."

"But may I tell this to the queen through her grace of Marlborough?" eagerly asked Lady Margaret.

"You may, dearest lady, and further than this, if her majesty will deign through the Duchess to make immediate inquiries into the circumstances, let the question be asked of Lady Monkton whether or not her niece has been surreptitiously carried off, and what steps have been taken for her recovery."

The party then entered the palace, where, having separated, Sandron was shortly after

summoned to the presence of the queen. He found the Duchess of Marlborough and his royal mistress together, the latter thus addressed him :

"What is this that our good Duchess of Marlborough has been telling us, young sir, as relates to the scene in the city yesterday? Methought the day for carrying off damsels had been passed, but, by our faith! it seems otherwise. Have we not Simon Fraser, the Lord Lovat, and others before our eyes guilty of these malpractices?* Men seem to think that with a female sovereign they can tamper at their pleasure, and it behoves us to inquire into the circumstance somewhat sharply; what do you know, good youth, touching the matter now before us?"

"May it please your majesty," replied Sandron, "as I hope for salvation, it is my implicit belief that a young lady with whom I had been reared from infancy, during the pageant adopted for

* See State Trials.

your gracious pleasure, has been forcibly carried away."

"Have you *ascertained* that fact, my good young sir?"

"No, madam, I have not, further than is vouched by my own conviction," replied Sandron.

"How! how is this?" resumed the queen; "what! have you sat tamely by, and taken no steps to solve the mystery? These be heavy charges to make, young man, and it would displease us much to find that they had been advanced without foundation. Come hither, dear Mrs. Freeman, I would converse with you apart."

Sandron took the hint and retired. In a few moments he was joined by the Duchess of Marlborough, who informed him that it was her majesty's pleasure that he should be relieved from all duty at court in order that he might make the necessary inquiries respecting the abduction of Miss Marmaduke; in the mean time, by the

queen's express desire, the Duchess of Marlborough was to apply to Lady Monkton for direct information touching the matter.

The result of the inquiry confirmed the correctness of Sandron's observation. Lady Monkton declared that her niece had been forcibly carried away, that though she had set every inquiry on foot she had been unable to discover any clue to the transaction. There was one person alone who protested she was sure of the author of the outrage, and that was Louisa Marmaduke's attendant, Morna; she laid the full charge at the door of Master Surface.

CHAPTER XXX.

She woke at length—but not as sleepers wake—
Rather the dead, for life seem'd something new,
A strange sensation which she must partake
Perforce, since whatsoever met her view
Struck not on memory, though a heavy ache
Lay at her heart, whose earliest beat, still true,
Brought back the sense of pain without the cause,
For, for a while, the furies made a pause.

BYRON.

OUR narrative left the gipsy Smith in company with the party who were carrying off Louisa Marmaduke, at the moment of his exclamation, when he had thrust his head from the carriage window, and observed that they were pursued. The ruffian descended unmasked from the coach, and confronted Corah, who, followed by her little dog, with the elastic step of a deni-

zen of the free forest, and with the pertinacity of woman when her heart and soul are interested, had easily kept the cumbrous machine in view.

The most violent passions of the gipsy's nature were stamped on every feature of his face, as, without uttering a syllable, Smith advanced to seize his wife. The moment Corah perceived him she stopped short in her career, uncertain whether to remain or fly, and in that fatal moment of hesitation all chance of escape was lost. The poor girl cast one hasty glance to see if help were near, but the street was nearly deserted, for all that were old enough or able enough to leave home had repaired to the rejoicings in the city; a little boy was the only other human creature near. Instantaneously the vice-like grasp of the savage gipsy compressed the arm of Corah, as he cried—

"How now, mistress, what mad prank are you upon?"

Corah knew the desperate violence of him

with whom she had now to deal; she knew that all dissimulation on her part was vain, and that unless God helped her no other assistance could be had. Her fears and her danger seemed to be shared in even by her little dog, for Spider shrank behind her, as if to escape the storm that was approaching. Hopelessly, helplessly, but steadily Corah gazed into her husband's face, but she neither spoke nor attempted to move.

"Bramble your body!" exclaimed Smith, at the same time shaking her violently by the arm, "I have long been on the look-out for you; come, come along, mistress; soh! you must dog the coach, must you, to blab the news to your pretty master at the Hall! You are true enough to pals of your own liking, but would serve your husband only with a halter. No more of this; bramble my body! come along; there's many a chalk behind the door that shall be rubbed out this go: on with you!"

During this rough treatment and address

Corah neither spoke nor moved save when forced to do so by the gipsy, but looked like some beautiful inhabitant of the wilderness, a deer or any other graceful creature, when caught, overpowered, and cowed, by the grasp of the tyrant man.

"What! you are sulky, are you?" continued the ruffian, as he proceeded to force her in the same direction in which the coach had proceeded; "well, the less of your blab the better; I'll soon cage you where you may beat and rumbustigate the bars in vain."

Three or four men now came in sight, and Corah flung herself determinedly on the pavement.

"Curse thee," exclaimed Smith, kicking her violently, and dragging her on the ground, "if you won't walk, why it's your fault, not mine."

"Help me, help," cried the poor girl, "or I shall be murdered!"

Two of the young men who were passing

stopped to remonstrate, and seemed inclined to interfere, but a man, according to his own assertion older and *therefore* wiser than they were, came in between, and cut their intentions short with this address:

"Take my advice," said the *wise old* man, "meddle not in quarrels 'twixt man and wife; if you take the part of one, gad's my life, you'll have 'em both against you. What! do I not remember, some forty years agone, going to see the cudgel play at the ring in Moor Fields, when by the way-side I see a man beating his wife; my blood was up in a moment then, so I knocks him down. 'Thank ye not a little for that,' says the woman, and sticks her ten talons into my cheeks. 'What sort of right has a stranger like you to meddle between us?' says she. 'Or mix your impudence up in our family affairs?' cried the man, as he pummelled away at me then instead of at his wife. Ay, ay, take my word for it, let this man and his helpmate settle mat-

ters their own way; it signifies little whoever is wrong, for they are nothing but gipsies after all. You see, d'ye mind me, they have driven matters to extremities, have run to the end of their double tether, and now they'll look out for the first convenient opportunity to wind it all up by running their rigs on the first as interferes."

"Come along, you vixen, drunk as you are," cried Smith, continuing to drag his wife along, when at that instant the little boy before mentioned stepped up, and with much earnestness exclaimed to the bystanders,

"She an't drunk; she was running after a coach, when this fellow got out of it: if you are men you will not see a woman so shamefully abused; she's no more drunk than I am."

"It's a lie!" roared the gipsy, at the same time felling the boy to the ground with such a sound box on the ear as brought the fire flashing to his eyes. "I say the young imp lies; and let any one interfere between me and my lawful

property who dares. What if she did run after the coach? I had got in it, and had wished her to ride, but she at first refused. Let no man interfere; come on, you slut, or bramble my body I'll lace you handsomely!" So saying, the ruffian continued to drag Corah along, till an empty hackney-coach passed which he hailed, and forced her into it.

It was not long ere the coach stopped at the house which had previously received Louisa Marmaduke, when the gipsy descended from the vehicle, and dragged his wife with him. Poor little Spider, who had followed at the heels of the horses, now seeing that the door of the house was about to shut him from his mistress, endeavoured to creep in with her, when a savage kick from the ruffian Smith rolled the faithful animal back into the street, and the door closed upon the parties.

"*You* seem to lord it there nicely, my fine chap," muttered Mistress Hayes; then speaking

more loudly, "Do you hear, you gipsy, if you are come here for the purpose of concealment, why you had best have let the dog in; you might then have cut its throat, and sold it to piemen for the hackney-coach and chairmen's breakfasts. Now we shall have it lingering about the premises, and if any one knows the dog, and any of you are looked for, why we shall bring more eyes this way than we can find winkers for. I have known Jonathan Wild run down his game with a less assistant than that dog may prove; but out on't! ah! I never yet knew a man who understood the value of timely caution. Men are only cautious when they are found out."

"Never *you* mind her dog, mistress," growled Smith, "I'll do for him some other day; but here, look sharply after this she-devil, take care she don't escape; I would not have her abroad again for all the deer in a squire's park."

"Hoity toity! go high, go low! here's a

whiff from a gipsy's pipe!" cried Mistress Hayes; "why he must think himself the king of the Tartars! I'll not take charge of this wench; I've enough and to spare on my hands already; are masters and men to run the same rig? You must look to the jade yourself, young man, for I have neither time nor place at your disposal."

"Come, come, mistress," replied Smith, "none of your Captain Grands over me; this here woman is of as much consequence as t'other, and our master will tell you so; why, she is the one as you was sent for to take charge on at Brentford. I don't stand jawing here no longer about nothing; do you mean to look to her or not?"

"Well then, all I can say is — I have no separate place for her," rejoined Mistress Hayes; "bring her up (pointing to the stairs) she must join company with the one brought but now, there is but that room in the house which is se-

cure, so there they must abide together; come, then, up with her and that quickly."

Had any of that villanous party observed the bright and satisfied sparkle of Corah's beautiful black eye when this arrangement was announced, knowing her determined disposition and high resolve, as her husband at least did, they would have consigned Corah to the coal-cellar, or anywhere else, rather than to the room upstairs; as it was, her satisfaction was not remarked, and she was soon locked in the room with the very person above all others whose fortunes she was most desirous to befriend.

Louisa was in bed, and her eyes closed in a disturbed and fitful slumber, or rather trance, induced by some powerful medicine which had been administered to the fevered, thirsting, and unsuspicious patient. Left to herself, Corah advanced cautiously, and knelt by the bedside. Louisa moved, opened her eyes, fixed them wildly on Corah, and then gradually raised her-

self on her arm, while, at the same time, she parted on her brow the luxuriant hair, which from the agitation of her slumber had broken from its fastenings and fallen over her face and neck. The mind of Louisa had been evidently wandering, for she seemed not at the moment to comprehend the nature of her situation. Perception, however, gradually returned, and she murmured in tones which trembled with apprehension lest some vision of the brain might be again deceiving her—"Corah—Corah, speak to me—is it not you?"

"Yes, dearest — sweetest lady — it is Corah come to save you if she can, to live or die for you if it be necessary; compose yourself, no harm shall happen while I am here. Do you see this, lady? (drawing at the same time a long sharp clasp knife or dagger from her vest); I will use that and freely too, ere a hair of your head shall fall in harm's way. Nay, be not fearful of it, it shall again be hidden from your

sight; the glance of its cold bright blade brings me consolation; it is as spotless and unsullied as the life it could unchain; do you think I would not even sooner bury it in my own breast, and free my soul from captivity, than let that heavenly gift, the pure spirit, be bound to earth by debased and polluted clay? But no more of this, such violence may not be needed; *you* shrink, sweet lady, from that to which *I* cling, and well you may, for as the new-fallen snow lies free from the step of man, so rests your gentle heart unsullied by the contemplation of those dark and final resources with which necessity has made me familar: there! there is no knife now — and I will be your own — your gentlest nurse."

As she said this, Corah passed her arm round Louisa, and drew her gently to the pillow.

CHAPTER XXXI.

In such a world, so thorny, and where none
Find happiness unblighted, or, if found,
Without some thistly sorrow at its side,
It seems the part of wisdom, and no sin
Against the law of love, to measure lots
With less distinguish'd than ourselves, that thus
We may with patience bear our mod'rate ills,
And sympathize with others, suff'ring more.

COWPER.

WHEN Sandron left the palace after his interview with the queen, it was too late in the evening to take any further step than that of immediately seeking the residence of Jonathan Wild, and endeavouring by the promise of gold to induce that worthy to interest himself in the matter.

On arriving at the place of his destination,

Sandron knocked at the door of a small house in Cock Alley, Cripplegate, which was opened by Mistress Milliner, alias Mrs. Wild, in person. To the question "if her helpmate was within?" she replied in the negative, for like the owl, the hours of night were those in which honest Jonathan most delighted to be abroad, and in which he was wont to look after the various ramifications of villany necessary to the maintenance of his power. Like an amphibious animal so quaintly described by showmen, as being unable to live on land while nevertheless it died in the water, roguery and honesty, vice and virtue, were absolutely necessary to this man's career, and the entire suppression of crime, therefore, was the last thing that entered into his views. According to the City Marshal's account of Wild, "the thief, the gaol, the justice, and the king's evidence were all managed by him, and none brought to the gallows but such as he thought fit."

He cared not how he came by money, its possession was all he coveted ; gold, if brought by the hand of the thief or murderer as the price of his being permitted to continue the course of his crimes, was just as acceptable to this official as if paid by the command of the law for the deliverance of villany to justice ; and as vice could arrive at an estimation of its value, and by thievish appropriation pay from a common purse as well, virtue was generally outbidden, and her interests lost or neglected.

Upon the invitation of Mistress Wild to "walk in," Sandron found himself in a small room, which by its prim arrangement was evidently used for the reception of the better sort of visitants. The chairs, like sentries at their post, were all drawn up close to the wall at equal distances from each other, while above them were suspended small square prints, representing the different murders and executions which of late years had interested the public.

Over the chimneypiece hung a constable's staff, a large horse-pistol, a blunderbuss, and a pair of handcuffs, garnished by several of the tail feathers from a peacock, which completed the decorations of the apartment. From this room a small glass door with a curtain before it opened into the shop, or office, established by Wild for negociating the recovery of stolen property, by which business he was at this time amassing considerable sums of money. So popular had his office become, that whoever was robbed in town or country immediately repaired to this nefarious broker as the surest way of recovering the articles they had lost. They had only to make up their minds to pay to a certain extent, and such was the fear in which Jonathan was held by thieves of every description, and so great his indefaticability and determination to bring all to justice who disobeyed his master-hand, that he had notice of every robbery that was committed, and not an article was

available to the trade till he had signified his pleasure. Memorandum books, parchments, and letters, which before were deemed useless or even dangerous by the thieves, were now through Wild's agency as eagerly sought after as money, for though these things were not generally useful, they were oftentimes of the utmost importance to individuals who were willing to ask no questions but to pay handsomely for their restoration.*

Sandron having left a message with Mrs. Wild to say that he desired to see her husband with the least possible delay, was about to depart, when a servant girl entered and informed her mistress, that there was a little boy in the shop who desired to speak with her.

"Shew him in here, then," said Mrs. Wild, "I dare say he has lost something, or brings some of the property recovered from the thieves by my husband, for if they have any fear of his

* See the City Marshal's Account.

taking them up, they often return the property by the hands of some innocent child. Ah! sir," she added, turning to Sandron, "you little know the trouble my good man takes to see that the laws are obeyed."

The girl now introduced a vulgar but intelligent-looking lad of about eight years old, who, on being asked his business, selected from a sort of portfolio beneath his arm a small packet carefully fastened and directed to Master Jonathan Wild, which he said two men had entrusted him with at the corner of the alley, stating that he would receive something for his trouble from the person to whom it was directed. This parcel having been closely examined by the lady of the house and its private marks approved of, she rewarded the boy with a small coin, who, having arranged some drawings, chalks and pencils, and other more childish articles contained in his portfolio, looked at Sandron with a sharp observant glance, and went forth into the street.

There was a shrewd air of observation about the boy that interested Sandron, and he asked who or what he was, and was informed that he was an entire stranger, sent by some party who did not choose to be known, and very probably would never come there again. Sandron having reiterated his orders as to Wild, was then also about to depart, when, as his hostess was preceding him to open the door, she stooped and picked up something from the ground.

"What is this?" she exclaimed, "why that child has dropped one of his drawings."

Sandron's eye fell upon it, and he immediately took it into his hand.

Childishly executed, but conceived with great humour, the sketch represented a rough villanous-looking man, with much the appearance of a gipsy, dragging along the ground and ill-using a beautiful girl, who, from her long black hair and deeply-pencilled eyebrows, head-gear and cloak, seemed to belong to the same tribe as

the ruffian whose grasp was upon her. Standing near were three men, the middle one of whom and the elder was puffing out his cheeks in a self-approving and important manner, with an assumption of greater wisdom than the rest; this figure was quaintly described. In the rear of the group stood a little boy making a sign of ridicule. The by-play attendant on the foreground consisted in a huge rough mastiff dog falling upon a little one, and an owl in an ivy-bush twitted by smaller birds.

Great care had evidently been bestowed upon the visage of the ruffian who was ill-using the girl, for every line in his features was intended to convey some evil passion, as if the artist himself had had reason to dislike the portrait he was engaged upon, and wished to render it hateful, and give it its full due of depraved expression. In fact, in the excited state of Sandron's mind, he was convinced that the sketch he held in his hand was intended to represent some scene in

which Corah, her husband, and her little dog had had their share. The likeness to the three last-mentioned was admirable, and on turning the drawing in his hand, Sandron observed the date to be but one day previously. To the surprise of Mrs. Wild, without a moment more of hesitation, he dashed past her into the street, and was soon lost in the shades of night.

Ill lighted and otherwise obscure as the place was, the pursuit that Sandron was engaged in soon became obviously of no avail. He demanded of every passenger whom he met if they had seen a boy pass by, some replied that they had, others that they had not, while one or two more waggishly inclined, asked "What boy?" and then laughed in the inquirer's face. Tired with his exertions to discover the lad, and doubting whether the picture was not intentionally dropped to afford him some information, Sandron then repaired to his lodgings, and retired to his couch, resolved to prosecute his

search at an early hour the following morning.

Fatigued and harassed, the usual time for rest had arrived, but what has the *hour*, what has *night* to do with sleep? The limbs may be conducted to a place of repose, the eyes may be shut, and sight and sound be excluded from the external senses, but oh! if the *heart* is *not* at rest, if doubts of the fate of those we love are laying a dreary pressure on the brain, the very absence of that abstraction induced by a multitude of causes only enables the soul to feel more keenly the concentration of its sorrows. Heated, oppressed, and restless in thought and limb, Sandron's mind wandered even to the days of his childish repose, when his cheek, not feverishly flushed, yet deeply blushing in its rosy sleep, pressed a pillow on which a dreary thought had never laid. When slumber was real oblivion, and when the re-awakening mind, called to a state of consciousness by the earliest ray of the

summer sun, and the many songs of the rejoicing birds, felt like an eager greyhound in the slips ready to start on the first sight of the game. By degrees, from actual thought the mind sought refuge in a dream, and if dreams *are* to be attributed to the vigils of the spirit, the labour was continued by the waking soul.

The Rectory, the fondly remembered house of Louisa, was placed before him, garlanded with all the blooming attributes of spring: each bower, grove, and orchard, rung with the wild minstrelsy of the feathered tribes, and the white doe bounded on the velvet turf of the lawn. As smiling as the face of nature, more sweet and beautiful than the honeyed blossoms, and as fresh as the light airs which stole through the perfumed and dewy leaves, Louisa seemed to sit by his side in the well-known bower, the pleasure of her society enhanced by a vague sensation of their having met after a long and cruel separation. Suddenly the blast of winter scattered

the surrounding blossoms in the air, and the glory of their various hues fell blank and colourless on the ground, while a fierce hound dashed through the storm, and seized the throat of the white doe. Sandron started to protect the favourite of his mistress, but uncouth figures in fantastic shapes and dresses crowded on the scene, and the mask of their leader falling off, he there beheld Louisa herself struggling in the arms of Master Surface, and crying to him for assistance.

Sandron snatched at his sword, but the blade seemed glued to the scabbard, while an unearthly weight oppressed his limbs, and bereft him of all power to interfere. Impressed with the horrible fantasy, and from a pillow wet with tears, the dreamer started from his sleep, and gazed wildly around him. All was still, the lamp in his chamber burned dimly, and the tardy morning had not yet peeped from the portals of the East. Sandron cast himself back upon his pillow, with

the dread of some terrible event about to happen to him, for which he could not well account. Bosom and brain were alike oppressed with melancholy misgivings, and the remaining hour of darkness was passed in forming resolutions and plans for his future guidance, and in that indomitable determination, ever healthful and ever consolatory to the heart of the high-souled and daring, namely, to smile on, or brave if necessary the worst of deaths, and to meet misfortune *like a man.*

CHAPTER XXXII.

"Whom the God's love die young," was said of yore,
And many deaths do they escape by this;
The death of friends, and that which slays even more —
The death of friendship, love, youth, all that is,
Except mere breath; and since the silent shore
Awaits at last even those whom longest miss
The old archer's shafts, perhaps the early grave
Which men weep over may be meant to save.

BYRON.

ON the following night to that in which Louisa Marmaduke and Corah had been confined together in the house in Tottenham Court Road, Mistress Hayes, her husband, and the ruffian Smith, were carousing and drinking in the front parlour below.

"I tell you both," said Mistress Hayes, in con-

tinuance of a conversation that had been going on, "we must find some way of catching or getting rid of that little dog of her's, it was howling in the street and looking up at all the windows day and night: some of the neighbours have already had their curiosity excited, and have been asking to whom it belonged. There! there it is again, whining and scratching at the front door. It won't let any one catch it, so what had we better do? Don't it know you?"

This last question was addressed to Smith, who jocularly inclined from his potations replied: —

"Know me! it does, but it knows me rather too well; we *have* been friends together, as the dog said to the tin-kettle, when the string broke that *had* tied it to his tail for the last two hours. Ha! ha! your query puts me in mind of Jim Stanley's reply, not the head of the tribe, but his brother, when the first of his squeakers was born. All the wenches and old women got fabricated around it, as is customary on all sich oc-

casions: there was coddling and swearing 'twas the beautifullist kid as was ever knowed, as always *is* sworn to, even if the chip's the huggliest unfledged sinner in Christendom; and mind me, this *was* jest the copperdest-skinned little cub as ever squalled for milk. 'What a dear!' says one.—'What handsome legs!' says another.—'And oh! my patience, what lovely hyes!' says a third, when *all* the time its peepers was jist like two round holes burned in a blanket with a red-hot poker.—'When d'ye think,' says they, turning to Jem, 'when d'ye think as the cherub will begin to know you?'—'When I've wopped it well,' says he. My eyes! at this there was sich a scrimmage among the women-folk, and a calling of brutes like mad, but Jem, he smoked his pipe and grinned. Howsomever, what I would say is this — I've doubled up that ere cur so often, that he'd as lief be scragged as bring his hide within a yard of the pint of my blessed shoe."

"Yes, you kicked him over the other day, and that was what made me blow you up, for I don't like cruelty, Mister Smith," said Mistress Hayes, with an affectation of feminine sensibility, and a wonderful alteration of manner towards her villanous guest; "but what shall we do to catch or get rid of the dog? could we not get the dark one from above to shew herself at the door? It being her dog it would come to her immediately."

"Get *who* down?" exclaimed Smith; "you don't know what a vixen you have to deal with or you'd never think of it. Why if you was to let her see the open street, and breathe the free air while there was anybody to call to or alarm, we should have such a hullabaloo about the house as would take us some time to get rid of. No, no, that won't do at no price. Stay—hark! there he is—and a curse to him—howling again; I have it; jist you get a plate of grub, he *must* be half starved by this time, and take it to

the threshold; your good man here will hold the light in the passage, and I'll stand behind the door ready to bang it to when the hungry vermin comes in."

This plan was immediately put into execution. Mistress Hayes, with some food in her hand, stooped at the threshold of the open door, and with many signs and expressions of endearment displayed the treasure to the poor forlorn little dog who sat shivering in the cold and comfortless street. The candle, held within the passage by her husband over his head, cast through the frost fog a red and uncertain glare, and yet fell at times upon the hard and forbidding features of the gipsy, and upon the croaching and timid little dog, with a distinctness that painter's would have loved to study. Had the genius of Hogarth then reached its maturity, the scene presented and the persons engaged in it would have suited well his master hand.

Poor little Spider, famished as he was, felt the

full force of the temptation, and crept supplicatingly towards the proffered platter. Mistress Hayes drew back a little, and the dog paused with his feet upon the threshold, snuffed in the air a moment, raised the bristles on his back and retreated growling into the street, whence a variety of coaxing could not again remove him.

"Bramble my body! come away," cried the impatient ruffian, making his appearance from behind the door which he shut with emphasis; "I'll poison the cur to-morrow, so let's to the pipe and pot again."

The worthy party had scarcely resumed their seats when a low knock, repeated more than once, gave notice of an application for admittance. Hayes opened the street-door and was followed on his return by Master Surface. That gentleman, having cast aside the large horseman's cloak in which he had been disguised, demanded, "if all had been well since his departure."

The serious indisposition of Louisa and the capture and disposal of Corah were then recounted to him. At this last piece of information he rose suddenly and passionately from his chair, spurning it from him with a violence which sent it rolling upon the floor.

"Hell and fury!" he exclaimed, "and how dare you cage them together! If there had been one thing which I could have wished more than another, it would have been their separation."

"I had no place to confine them separately, and you left no orders — not you," replied Mistress Hayes, reddening in her turn, and heated by the carousal that had been going on, "this is always the case; whatever one does for you for the best ever turns out to be the worst; I wish I was quit of it all."

"Well, Mistress, don't you lose *your* temper where *I* am concerned," said Surface, "for I am very little disposed to put up with it."

"Lose *my* temper indeed —— !"

"Nay, my dear," interrupted her husband deprecatingly, "the gentleman——"

"Hold your tongue, you fool !" she continued, "what do *you* know of the matter? just mind me; don't you Gentleman or Lord either, any one in *my* house, for I'll be mistress, lord and master—all in one. What! as the parson says, death levels all distinction, why so does a common danger make all those even, who embark in the same unlawful venture."

"I tell you, woman," said Surface, "that your having put these girls together has ruined half my plans; there will be secrets imparted by one to the other which I would have given worlds to have withheld. What !" turning to the gipsy, Smith, "could not your blundering villany foresee objections, and have made a better disposition of affairs? Curse you both together ! I have a mind to give you each up to the tender mercies of your great master, Jonathan

Wild, and to have you hung to feed the crows."

At the mention of surrendering them to justice, the gipsy seized his great coat which hung on the back of his chair, and seemed to search some concealed pocket for a weapon, while Mistress Hayes, starting to her feet and trembling with passion, motioned Smith to be still, but spoke as follows : —

" Surrender *me* indeed ! what, *you* surrender one whose slightest word could bring you to that stern creditor, justice, who has so long cried out on you for quits ! If you have no *mercy* for those whose ruin you in the first instance effected, you have *fears* at least of their desperate revenge. What !" she continued, lashing her demoniac spirit into madness, but at the same time compressing with an immense effort all external and violent emotion, " do you dare to think, when you degrade the nature of woman, that you eradicate her power of endurance, her soul

to bear, her heart to love, and all the quick sensibilities and deep devotion which form the wide field of her existence? To your teeth I tell you that you do *not* eradicate the source of the deep murmuring stream that feeds all these better perfections, you only stain its waters, pollute, pervert their destination, and turn them into a raging torrent. I'll have my revenge on you, on the things upstairs, and——"

Surface did not wait another word, for the woman as she spoke the last sentence sidled towards him, and in her hand he perceived a large knife which she had taken from the table. Seizing her by both her wrists, he forced her to the ground, and held her there till exhausted by the violence of her struggles she became passive and even burst into tears. All this time the gipsy sat smoking his pipe sullenly at the table, while the husband of the woman, frightened out of his wits, fidgeted around them as if uncertain what to do.

Surface possessed himself of the knife and left her, when she arose and seated herself in a corner. Turning to Smith, Surface then said, "This is always the case with your ungrateful crew; you first blunder in the business I set you upon and then you rebel."

"I do neither the one or the other," replied the gipsy, "I know'd nothing of your plans; you wanted my vixen, and you've got her, and I'm all the better for it. I'm ready now to do your honour's bidding; say the word if you wants a twang, a prig, a buttock, or a cull, I'll find them for you, and as to the removal of an innimie, why blow me if I'd be any ways nice in that matter. Don't say then as *I* rebels, for Prime Minister, as we calls our old leading Neddy in the camp, an't more apt to his load of tent-sticks, nor to head the donkeys what follows behind, nor I am to obey the word of command; that is, when folks behave like gemmen, and act as sitch."

So saying, the gipsy took a long pull at the can, which seemed wonderfully to increase the amiability of his temper.

"Well then," replied Surface, "you must induce your wife to come down stairs, and a back room — the more out of the way the better — shall be rendered safe for her detention."

"Bramble my body, down she shall come!" said the gipsy, rising and tossing his pipe into the fire.

"Stay!" cried Surface, "you must not go boring into the room with any of your violence now; you might frighten one of them to death, and that would not suit the scheme I have in view. Mistress Hayes," he continued in a milder voice, "is the angry fit over? come, be yourself again, I want your valuable assistance!"

Mistress Hayes arose from her position in the corner, and sobbing, sullenly resumed her seat at the table; here she was helped to a strong measure of brandy and water, which had a sedative effect upon her excited feelings.

"Now then," said Surface, "hear my plans and let us have no mistakes; these women must be confined separately. Let her, Corah, be removed from the chamber above with as little disturbance as possible, and that to-night. I would converse with them apart. The arrangement of the matter is left, Mistress Hayes, to you; attend to it with the same vigilance I have seen in you before, and the reward shall be proportionate. Business calls me away, if I return not late to-night, expect me at this time to-morrow — till then, farewell! Mark me! be cautious, but be resolute!" He then quitted the house, leaving his myrmidons to themselves.

Louisa Marmaduke was still suffering and in danger from the nervous indisposition that had assailed her, though the attention and society of Corah had effected much change for the better. At intervals of the day they had conversed, and it may be supposed that Corah had imparted a faithful account of the habits and character of

Master Surface. Night had once more closed on their gloomy prison; the steps and voices of passengers in the street, heard at any time very indistinctly, had gradually and at length entirely ceased, and in the still silence of the hour the captives sought repose. The bed of Louisa was close by the wall, while Corah had arranged her more lowly couch at the side of it, so that no one could approach her adopted mistress without her knowledge, unless they did so from the foot of the bed.

The room was dimly lighted by a small lamp and they were both asleep, Louisa deeply so from the powerful narcotics which were still administered, while Corah slept in that light and startlish repose from which the mind, when ill at ease, endeavours to snatch a stamina for future and expected trials. She had laid down ready dressed for an emergency, having only drawn the knife, which she always carried, from her vest and placed it by her side.

From her brief slumber she was soon awakened by the cautious turning of the key in the door of their chamber, and then by the appearance of Mistress Hayes. Still feigning to be asleep but ready for momentary action, she watched the motions of their visiter. The woman, taking the lamp, at the same time disguising its light with the hand that was at liberty, approached the side of the couch, and gazed for an instant on those she deemed to be unconscious of her presence; she then as cautiously withdrew.

Some time elapsed ere Corah was again disturbed, and she was relapsing into unconsciousness, when she was once more aroused by the sound of her own name. It was repeated, and with great appearance of caution: "Corah, Corah — hist!" She replied not, but sat up eagerly on the couch, for it was a strange voice, and a vague hope of assistance flitted in her mind and thrilled through all her faculties. She observed that the door was slightly opened,

through which the strange voice once more came.

"Corah, Corah, hither!"

She hesitated no longer, but, starting up, flew noiselessly to the door; it was pushed quickly open, and she found herself in the presence of Mistress Hayes and the worthy helpmate of that woman whose voice it was that had been used to decoy her. In company with them was her own husband, Smith; the latter seized Corah in his arms, while at the same time he forced a handkerchief into her mouth to drown her cries.

Quickly as this affair was managed, it did not stifle the commencement of the shriek which Corah gave. The gipsy, assisted by the other man, bore his victim down stairs; Mistress Hayes sprang to the couch which Corah had left, and possessed herself of the knife she had previously observed and even dreaded, while the neighbours were awakened by the continued

barking of a little dog, who seemed in its fury to be tearing up the very stones with which the street was paved.

Deep and deathlike as the trance was into which the drugs had thrown Louisa, the shrill commencement of the stifled shriek of Corah aroused her to a partial and most painful state of consciousness, and slightly raising herself on her arm, with eyes that would not entirely open on the efforts of her mind, she murmured the name of Corah, and stretched out her hand in the direction of the couch by her bed-side.

Mistress Hayes, the false, the abandoned of God and man, lay quietly down on the place yet warm from the pressure of the purest fidelity and affection that ever lived in the breast of woman, and the wandering hand of Louisa became aware of the presence of *a* living creature, and was content. Too often is it thus—Virtue, wearied with the unkindly usage of the world, is glad to turn from the every-day disgusting

and vicious disclosures of the society which surrounds her, and longing to find a spot on which to rest the purity of her love, affixes to the first deceitful resemblance of the reality that offers, till all too late she finds that the only mirror in which to meet an image of herself is treasured but in the blue vault of heaven.

Louisa sunk once more to sleep, in the vain hope that she was still protected by her faithful friend.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Where is my loved one? oh! whisper me where;
At the end of the earth? I will seek for her there.
Is she throned in a gem in some jewel-lit cave?
Does she ride on the foam of some snow-crested wave?
Does she float like a cloud through the regions of air?
My soul and my spirit will follow her there!
Oh! the globe is too narrow to hide what we love,
And the billow below, and the vapour above,
For the heart is a guide that ne'er faints on the way,
That cares not to slumber, and asks not to stay.
Let the worshipped one dwell in earth, ocean, or air,
The spirit that loves her will follow her there!

MISS PARDOE.

AT an early hour of the morning immediately following the visit to the house of Jonathan Wild, that estimable functionary waited upon Charles Sandron. Fatigued as the thieftaker was with his nocturnal perambulations, the pro-

spect of a good booty made him forget the labours of the previous night, and his keen grey eyes twinkled beneath his projecting brows as slily as ever: indeed so indefatigable was he in his calling that his health had often suffered from over-exertion.

Wild listened attentively to the account Sandron gave of the circumstances attendant on the abduction of Miss Marmaduke, but at the conclusion of his narrative professed himself profoundly ignorant of the parties concerned in it. On Sandron's suspicion being mentioned to him as regarded Master Surface having a hand in the transaction, Wild shook his head, and affected to discountenance the idea. Some questions were then asked of him relative to his knowledge of the gipsies, each of whom he confessed to know very well, for in his country negociations he had often a great deal of communication with that particular description of person by which it would seem that they were

more or less mixed up with the greater portion of the crime committed not only at distances, but even in the immediate vicinity of London. Wild's extensive influence among these wandering tribes was afterwards made manifest by his being elected king of the gipsies. Smith he described as a most determined villain, and gave an account of his having been condemned to the gibbet for highway robbery, but eventually pardoned; the reprieve arriving after he had been turned off. He was however cut down, and resuscitated by the surgeons, to serve, as Wild said, for another day. This interesting epoch in his life had, among his associates, procured for him the name of "Half-hung Smith."*

"But," continued Wild, "have you no suspicion in any other quarters? There is Colonel Charteris; he is a likely man to have a finger in such a pie, or to have lent his house for the purpose; since his return from Scotland and his

* See Newgate Register.

gambling affair with the Duchess of Queensbury,* he has been playing old Harry with the women; but he is rich and can afford to pay for it, so he'll run on further still—*if I will let him.*" The last words were muttered to himself.

Sandron considered this hint for a moment, and then said.

"I have heard of the man you allude to, but no, I tell you my opinion is that Master Surface is the head of the offence. Search for him, find Corah if you can, for I know that she was present at this transaction, and she is not one to let her enemies or friends on these occasions escape her observation: should she also have been

* The Duke of Queensbury was then Commissioner to the Scottish Parliament, at that time deliberating on the proposed union with England. Charteris at cards won three thousand pounds of the Duchess, which induced the Duke to bring a bill into the House to prohibit gaming for above a certain sum. Perhaps this was the only benefit which ever arose from the acts of the abandoned Colonel Charteris.—See Newgate Register, vol. ii. p. 212.

seized and confined, as I have reason to believe from having seen her dog wandering without her, and from this sketch" (shewing the one which the boy had lost or purposely let fall from his portfolio), "why then on your vigilance alone I must chiefly depend; should you succeed and unravel the mystery, every thing in the shape of reward shall be at your service."

Wild examined the drawing, and confessed that the resemblance to the gipsies was extraordinary, and then continued. "What I look at most is the little dog; a person might accidentally draw two figures which we might fancy were representations of people of whose likeness our own minds were full; but, hang it! they would not so exactly draw the dog. Why, when you met the latter wandering about, did you not watch where he went to?"

"It never entered my mind," replied Sandron.

"Well then, sir, if you should see the dog

again, stick to him like wax." Wild then turned to depart, but hesitating a little, as if wishing to say something, the subject of which communication might be coupled with difficulty, at last, rubbing the end of his nose, and looking on the ground, he said, " And, sir, if I *should* be lucky enough to wind up the whole affair, what—what will you give me for it?"

" All, any thing, every thing, you shall be amply remunerated," replied Sandron. " Off with you; what are you waiting for now? you look dissatisfied !"

" It is just this, sir," said Wild; " I am a poor man, and though I adopt the safest plan my profession admits of, nevertheless I am every moment in personal danger from the violence and revenge of the ruffians with whom I have to deal; the only pull in my favour is—when once they take to the trade of crime I contrive to let them run on, as if I was their friend, till they are wanted once for all, and get transported or

hung. Prevention's no part of my duty; had I worked in that line I should have been murdered long ago; the labourer in my case is well worthy of his hire. What I want to know is, what you will give me for the affair, 'all and every thing' are wide words, nihil sonans, as the lawyers would say; if I succeed, tell me, sir, the sum *you* are good for; name the price, and there will then be *no* mistake."

"Have I not told you, sirrah," cried Sandron, losing all patience, "that you will be handsomely rewarded? Bear this in mind also, Master Wild, that you are a public officer, and that I have a right to your service without hiring you at all."

"Certainly, sir, I'll do my best," replied Wild with civil gravity, but at the same time with such a leer as plainly indicated that he would do nothing in the matter; "good morning, sir, I wish I may get to the bottom of this."

"Stay yet a moment," cried Sandron, mastering his indignation, and seeing through Wild's determination to have the bargain his own way. "If you succeed in bringing the offenders to justice, and in the restoration of Miss Marmaduke to her friends, one hundred pounds are your's. I name that sum, but my gratitude to you will know no bounds, for the safety of her whom I seek is far above any nominal value."

"Content, sir," said Wild, bowing low as he departed. "Now we understand each other."

Immediately after this interview, Sandron examined and placed in his belt a good and trusty sword, when he proceeded into the streets. He had not walked far ere he was joined by his eccentric friend Swift, to whom he related the pursuit he was upon, hoping to receive some benefit from his shrewd and caustic observation.

"You did well, good youth," remarked Swift, "to name a good round sum as the wages of the thieftaker's success; there is nothing to be

done without money. It sharpens the nose of the constable, steadies the slippery tongue of counsel, and adds a graceful curl to the judge's awful wig. A private penny goes further than a public pound. Men regard the public service-money as guerdon given them to eat, drink, and be merry—to find them in good clothes, and make them *look* respectable, as well-appointed footmen should when attached to the great carriage of the state. Faith! on they roll with the rest of the household, but attend not to individual calls upon their attention, although each who makes the application is heavily taxed, and pays for their saucy appearance. There are no two things more neglected by the officers who are supposed to preside over their interests than the ends of justice and the preservation of the royal forests. The thief and the constable are in league, while the deer-stealer, poacher, and forester smoke over the haunch and pheasant in amicable participation

of the spoil. On the royal domain, if the windfall of a tree is desired by some one wishing for the timber, the lightest air will bring it down; oh! but there's many a goodly oak supposed to bow its head to the wind, when in reality the grating of the midnight saw has scared the squirrel slumbering in its branches. Zounds! go higher, go higher, good youth, the people have got it that the gold of France has been busy with the votes of our Commons' House of Parliament. There is not such a thing in existence as a really disinterested man."

As they thus walked on in conversation, they were met by the Duke of Argyle and Lord Grimstone, the former of whom had lately arrived from the seat of war with despatches from the Duke of Marlborough. It was the Duke of Argyle in conjunction with Colonel Dalrymple, afterwards Earl of Stair, and the Earl of Orkney, who had been chiefly instrumental in bringing Colonel Charteris, whom we have previously

mentioned, to a court-martial for gambling and usury when with the army in winter quarters—the sentence of that court-martial having been, that the sword of the prisoner should be broken, his commission cancelled, the money he had usoriously obtained refunded, and that he should be drummed out of the regiment.

Sandron exchanged greeting with the Duke and with Lord Grimstone as they passed, and Swift asked who they were.

Sandron replied, with the casual addition that his friend Lord Grimstone was reported as about to marry a very pretty girl.

"No! is he?" asked Swift, with an odd eagerness of manner, "and is your friend a good-tempered young man?"

"He is."

"And gifted, or I should say, punished, with a quick sensibility of feeling?"

"He is, most sensitive."

"Has he an open heart, mild and popular

manners? I observe that he is rather good-looking," continued Swift, "high opinion of and great deference for the female sex generally?"

"Ay," replied Sandron, "he has all these good qualities, and many more into the bargain."

"Then," cried Swift, "if you like him, if you value his future peace and happiness, step in, sir, step in, good youth, lose not a moment but forbid the banns; he is the last man of all others that should marry."

"What!" replied Sandron; "why, I have always been inclined to believe that such virtues as these would tend to the mutual happiness of man and wife."

"Very likely," said Swift, "good youths often imbibe such notions from their mammas, but unless you could find a woman without a head, good men, good youth, ought *not* to marry."

"And why not?" demanded Sandron, much amused with the serious and emphatic manner of his reverend friend.

"Did you see that man pass us but now?" exclaimed Swift, without answering the question of Sandron. "If we could mend and eradicate the imperfections and inequalities of our nature, as well a that man cures the diseases of the body, matrimony *might* be rendered pleasantly available. That was Doctor Sloane, the great naturalist and physician of the day, and founder of the British Museum. But to return, you ask me why good men ought not, if they consulted their own safety, to marry; simply for these reasons: If the bridegroom be good-tempered, he will not possess acerbity sufficient to check the sweet advances of her caressful ambition, and she will obtain imperceptibly unmeet dominion over him. To a sensitive and delicate-minded man, a quarrel with the creature that he loves is misery, is death without the benefit of clergy, while to the perceptions of most women it is but an agreeable episode in the monotony of their lives, a bittersweet, like the fruit bear-

ing that name, for a genus of which they sold their husbands to the devil. After a quarrel, then they court, and the farce of love-making is got up again. Quarrels and tears are but April clouds and showers to the female heart, while in the sterner and more deeply-fashioned breast of the male, the smallest ruffle on the water amounts to a billow, and every sigh to a storm, the mischief of which, though not momentarily apparent, lies at the foundation of the rock and gradually undermines its natural stability. If a man truly and sensitively loves a woman, and duly appreciates the perfection, delicacy, and maintenance of each virtue she possesses, and is a sensible man, too, he has a horror of wounding the fine points and gentle colours of her mind, which, like the hues on the wings of the butterfly, fade and shrink from any ruder approach than is made by the soft airs of heaven. However she may deserve a rebuke, he cannot summon to his lips the sharp and necessary severity to an-

nounce it, or if he does summon them, the pain which he inflicts on himself far surpasses the punishment he awards, when, the offending party herself observing this, finds some old crabbed mother or relation also at hand, to whisper 'if she perseveres, it is evident that her husband will soon grow tired of reproof, and rather submit to her caprices than undergo the misery of their reprehension.'

"If he does reprehend them, every moment that he exerts his just power steals a degree from the plenitude of his affection, till he finds the best and least worldly links in the chain of his love gradually corroding and wearing away. Oh! *what* can be greater misery than for a man to be taught by the thing he madly loves that she is not the embodied reality of his own beautiful and impassioned but delusive dreams. Take my word for it, good youth, hie thee to thy friend, tell him, so that the counsel comes from thee, not me, to hover at a distance as much as

he likes round the flowers, and when he discovers, as in each case of a verity he will, that the hues of any one of them offered to the beams of the sun are of far brighter colours than those which are on the side which turneth to the earth; let him flit away to some other painted deception, and settle again but for a time. Let him clog his legs, his lips with honey, but above all keep unfettered the freedom of his wings. If weary of life, let him pray Heaven to remove him; but marry!—no, no, if he is the excellent christian you have described, bid him not, for the love of life, enter into the great lottery of wedlock."

"Most reverend pastor," exclaimed Sandron, "beshrew me if you are not the most uncommon comforter I ever counselled with. What—ha—ha—hath Stella taught you this? she cannot have done so either, as you have dispensed with a portion of the requisite situation."

"Teque his, infelix, exue monstris," ex-

claimed Swift, with an affectation of horror, "get out of your ugliness, good youth, and lay what I have said to your bosom, depend on it I am right."

"No," replied Sandron, "I will not believe it, my view of the state of matrimony is this. We will suppose my friend is married, he is all nobleness, truth, and honour, but with energy of nature sufficient to make him fearful in his wrath, while at the same time there is a calm and cheerful sunniness in his peaceful moments, a poetry in his ideas, through which his society never tires, rendering the fact obvious to his wife, that with the world he must be popular. She, the partner he has chosen, is meek, and naturally so reserved, as to be deemed generally cold, so cold that the very lips of slander cannot find a surface in any part of her conduct on which to leave the venomed dampness of their breath. She warms not, smiles at no approach but his, and by the gentle, the religious purity

of her mind and manners, drives the devil Jealousy away, and lives but to do her duty. Ill-tempered fools, coarse minded, selfish men, could not appreciate such a girl as this, therefore I maintain that a man such as I describe my friend is the aptest for the wedded life. Oh! I can picture to myself nothing so beautiful as that state of really happy association; and in my soul I pity the man who is lost to its superlative attractions."

"Do you, indeed! my good youth," replied Swift. "Dic mihi, si fueris tu leo, qualis eris? Just go then, be the beast, get married, and I will dine with you on the second anniversary of your wedding, when perhaps, after the third bottle of good old wine, we shall have heart enough to run up the last twelve months of your matrimonial amusements." So saying, with a sly ironical smile Swift turned into another street, and left Sandron to prosecute his inquiries.

London is a wide, a wild, and a weary place

to search for any body or any thing, without some clue by which to prosecute the inquiry, and Sandron felt the difficulties and almost hopelessness of the task which he had undertaken: however, any thing was better than inactivity, and while awaiting the result of Wild's endeavours, he resolved to wander in search of any circumstance which fortune might bring within his observation. Street after street, alley, lane, and corner, were sauntered through, till his brain almost swam with the confusion occasioned by the constant succession of strange human beings that passed him, each of whom appeared to hurry on in the human flood, as if the general business or current of the wide waters of life depended on their individual exertion. At length he found himself near Ludgate Hill, in the parish of St. Martin; tired, dispirited, and weak with fasting, for his breakfast had been of the earliest, and it was now waxing late in the day: he was on the point of entering a small tavern

to demand some refreshment, when his attention was called to the opposite side of the street.

The mind, tired of its own communion, is always prone to seize on slight circumstances to divert it in other channels, and this was an instance of it. Immediately opposite to Sandron the door of a small tenement opened with some violence, and ere it was sufficiently wide to permit of a free passage, a number of little boys burst into the street, one or two of the foremost falling down, while the rest either stumbled or jumped over them with shouts and exclamations of joy. Sandron was for the moment amused by the scene, and thought on the merry hours of his own childhood, when, with an affectionate and pretty companion, his light step and joyous heart kept touch and time together. Boy after boy came leaping from that humble door, and like the airy bubbles which arise to the surface of the sea, danced off in different directions, till they were lost in the surrounding haze. The

school, for such it was, had broken up, the last scholar had departed, when a little boy appeared who was evidently not one of the daily pupils, for the hour was no holyday to him: he looked sorrowfully after his glad companions, as if longing to join them in their retreating gambols, and, having tarried till they were out of sight, retired once more within the house and closed the door behind him.

The glance which Sandron caught of this boy, brief as the time was for observation, sufficed to show the features of the lad from whom he had obtained the drawing: striding, therefore, hastily across the street, Sandron knocked at the portal for admittance. Suspense did not long await him, for the boy whom he sought replied to his summons, invited him to enter, and led the way into an humble parlour where sat an elderly man, whom he introduced as his father. The latter rose respectfully, and appealed by his looks for further information.

"My business," exclaimed Sandron, immediately addressing the old man, "is with your son; a drawing from a portfolio which he carried of late has accidentally perhaps fallen into my possession; did he not lose one on the night on which he delivered a parcel at the public office of Jonathan Wild?"

"Did you so, William?" asked the old man, "speak, reply to the question of the gentleman yourself."

The boy after some slight hesitation bashfully murmured an affirmative, when his father resumed, taking up and displaying at the same time a number of sketches which were lying on the table. "Do not be ashamed, William, of your talents, the gentleman will pardon errors in one so young; see, sir," he continued turning to Sandron, "these are more of his designs, and I have an honest pride in saying that, though I teach the boys to read and write, I could not instruct my son so well as he is taught by the

hand of Nature. Hitherto he has never studied under a master, and yet here be some sketches which in their humour would not disgrace the conception of a proficient in the art of limning. I am bringing him up to the trade of an engraver of cyphers and coats of arms, but, though I say it that should not say it, my son, sir, has talent for other things."

"He has, indeed," replied Sandron, "but my present anxiety is in regard to the drawing which has fallen into my possession; did you sketch it from mere fancy, my good boy, or is it an intended representation of some scene you have witnessed? Tell me without fear, there is no harm in having studied the likeness of any one, are the figures in that drawing portraits?"

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, gathering courage from Sandron's kind method of address, "I saw a ruffian ill using a woman who was accompanied by a little dog. He accused her of intoxication, and because I said she was not so and told the truth he beat me."

"And can you show me," asked Sandron, "where you witnessed this scene, and in what direction the parties proceeded?"

"Yes, sir, that I can, this moment if father will let me go, for I watched them as long as I was able," replied the boy.

"Go, my son," said the old man, "show the gentleman, and tell him all he wishes to know; speak the truth, and God will protect you."

The boy thus enjoined, seized his little cap with the utmost alacrity, when Sandron as he turned to depart asked the old man to whom he was indebted for the service. "My name is Hogarth," was the reply, and Sandron then quitted the house, in company with his diminutive guide.

END OF VOL. II.

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